IN PRIZE TEN 009AUG29 81 1 01
PERIODICALSDEPT
THE SHERROD LIBRARY
E TENNESSEE ST UNIV
JOHNSON CITY TENN 37614

The Nation.

February 14, 1981 $1

EDITORIAL

REAGANTALK, HAIGSPEAK

The only important member of the Reagan foreign affairs gang who hasn't uttered a verbal or conceptual howler is the designated Deputy Secretary of State, William Clark Jr., and that is because this California crony is a complete ignoramus, as his confirmation hearing showed.

The new leaders of the free world go on talking through their hats and feet, led by the Chief they Hail. Reagan seems to believe that it was Trotsky, not Stalin, who won the great Communist struggle over "world revolution" versus "socialism in one country." At his first press conference he rewrote six decades of Russian history when he said he knew of "no leader of the Soviet Union since the Revolution" whose policy was not "world revolution." And, said he, as he reversed the signs on détente's "one-way street," their "morality" authorized them "to commit any crime, to lie, to cheat." As for the arms that would back up the new American militancy, they will be "refurbished," he declared, perhaps meaning redecorated or simply polished.

Now take this formula from General Haig: "International terrorism will take the place of human rights in our concern because it is the ultimate abuse of human rights" (and, naturally, it is the U.S.S.R. that is "training, funding and equipping international terrorism"). Terrorism, properly defined, cost the world 1,700 lives last year, by the highest estimate. Compare that to the thousands killed by Somoza, our friend in Nicaragua until he was forced out, and the 10,000 massacred in tiny El Salvador last year to maintain that oligarchy.

Take two parts of Reagan "morality" against "world revolution," add Haig anti-terrorism in generous measure and cook over the high heat of "refurbished" militarism. It's an explosive mixture, and it's on the table.

SECURITY AND TERRORISM
Victor Navasky

MICHIGAN'S RED SQUADS
Jim Jacobs
Richard Soble

P.R. AND THE PILL
Becky O'Malley

DU PONT'S NYLON CURTAIN
Robert Sherrill

'EARLY POMPEIAN'
Derek Walcott

EURO-COMMUNISM
Staughton Lynd

STALIN IS DEAD

SOCIALISM AND THE SOVIET BLOC

DANIEL SINGER

The unbelievers were delighted, and as for believers, there were some among them who were even more delighted than the unbelievers themselves. . . .

What happened was that an odor of corruption began to come from the coffin, growing more and more perceptible. . . .

—Dostoyevsky, The Brothers Karamazov

Readers may recall the shocked grief and revulsion of Alyosha Karamazov as he discovered that the corpse of his saintly master, Father Zossima, was stinking. The collective reaction after Stalin's death was both less sudden and more traumatic. Nearly three years elapsed after the funeral before the believers were told by Khrushchev, the official keeper of the shrine, that their demigod had not been as holy as he had been painted. On February 23, twenty-five years after Khrushchev's revelations, the Soviet Communist Party will hold its twenty-sixth Congress. Whatever takes place in the Kremlin hall, we are in the twilight of the Brezhnev era. Once Khrushchev lifted the coffin lid, the odor began to spread, affecting party members and fellow travelers, sympathizers and mere onlookers. It was to change the moral climate of politics. The shock may prove salutary in the long run, even if it has not so far. Indeed, not unsuccessful efforts have been made to present the stench of decaying Stalinism as the natural smell of socialism and in this way to discredit Marxism, revolution, or the very idea of resistance to the established order.

Macaulay once claimed that there is no spec-

(Continued on Page 176)

ETSU LIBRARY

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

LETTERS.

The Protest/Survive File

Waldport, Ore.

Congratulations to *The Nation* for giving E. P. Thompson an opportunity to present his impassioned and devastating analysis in the length that it requires ["A Letter to America," Jan. 24]. Most readers of *The Nation* no doubt know something of END [European Nuclear Disarmament] and its literature, but the basic document is now easily available and our first act should be to see that it is widely distributed.

I would like to emphasize the importance of Thompson's brilliant and moving section on the debasement, if not destruction, of the language. I think this is central to any effort to create an effective campaign in America. It is worth remembering that one of the key reasons behind the breakdown of the 1960s movement involved just such debasement of the language by the left. But Thompson's point about "thinking people to death" has been most recently displayed . . . in the aftermath of the release of the hostages by Iran.

This fundamental work of unmasking the euphemisms of the nuclear warriors is vital because Americans are suffering a serious case of empire shock for the first time in their cultural history. The oil crisis and the Iranian revolution may have had more to do with this than Vietnam or any action by the Soviets. For one thing, most Americans know that we are not going to initiate, or even seriously risk, nuclear war over Vietnam, Poland or Afghanistan.

But significant sections of the public, and a powerful group of policy makers, are moving toward a willingness to use major force in the Middle East, Africa and Latin America. All that must be talked about in blunt language as the escalator to nuclear conflict.

As this suggests, I think we Americans face a more difficult problem than Thompson and his compatriots in Europe. For one thing, the American people occupy a continent and that poses serious problems of communication. This is particularly true because so many of our Thompsons are concentrated in, and think far too narrowly in terms of, the Boston-New York-Washington strip city. And, furthermore, the deep fear of continuing economic decline generates psychological as well as political support for—or acquiescence in—imperial policies and actions. That is the heart of imperial shock: better almost anything than another Great Depression.

Hence these suggestions:

(*1*) We should make a major effort to establish our presence throughout the country by dealing with local and regional newspapers, radio and TV and various organizations which reach the general public. A surprising number of those communication links are open to serious argument about the issue of nuclear war and economic alternatives.

(*2*) We must develop coherent alternatives to empire as the only basis of liberty and material well-being.

(*3*) Finally, I suggest that we go out into our culture with the rallying cry provided by George Frost Kennan: "Cease This Madness."

William Appleman Williams

New York City

E. P. Thompson's essay is superb as is everything he does. But what comment can one make on such a piece? What useful additions, what bright thoughts, what solace can one add to this case history of collective, self-justifying madness? I associate myself wholly with his call for a wedge of European sanity between the two superpowers, both caught up in their apparently irreversible programs of military expansion. But I doubt that such a wedge of sanity can ultimately reverse this ever-escalating process. Still less do I think it can arrest the spread of the weaponry of extinction into the hands of nations and groups compared with whom the Soviets and ourselves look like pillars of moderation and restraint.

Is there no outlook, then, other than horror on a scale that numbs the mind? I can think of only one barricade that may withstand the storm, assuming that the wedge of sanity fails. It is the possibility—perhaps even the likelihood—that nuclear war when it comes, as it almost assuredly will, will be limited enough not to bring about the death of the world, but horrible enough finally to force the survivors to undo nuclear weaponry, and perhaps nuclear technology, entirely, everywhere, and forever.

Robert L. Heilbroner

Stevens Point, Wis.

I do not know how to say how much I feel that E. P. Thompson's "A Letter to America" is the most important document published in *The Nation* in quite a number of years. And *The Nation* publishes many important documents.

Even with the dismal message—appearing also in *The Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists* and *In These Times*—I am nevertheless heartened. I get some measure of hope in finding that many other people are deeply concerned with the imminence of nuclear explosions, whether this comes from the "inadvertent" accident or a mistake at a power plant or the triggering of a bomb. Each seems likely, and each is part of the other.

From New Mexico, Nevada and Utah, to Lapland, Eniwetok and two cities in Japan the invisible radiation waves have taken and are taking their deadly toll in what are called, in the innocence of language, "health effects." Death is the effect, as is agony—suffering. And then there is this lulling of the mind. There is this lullaby of the peaceful atom to be sung, perhaps, by children scrunched under their school desks, playing with dolls in their middle-class bomb shelters, learning to appreciate the idea that we had won! That only half our people were killed instantly. How smart are our elders! To practice evacuation; to dig holes in the ground; to learn from the pack rats; to teach us that it is good to win and save democracy with a holocaust as our shining sword. How good to be assured that our bombs will kill people, but not harm property. How lovely! With half the people dead, we can have our choice of unused radioactive dwellings and children can play war in real tanks, once the corpses are removed.

As for presidents, prime ministers and politburos—what will be left to govern? But I suppose that if they survive they will not change; they will behave as if they were governing and remain MAD.

My daughter was among those sentenced to thirty days at Alderson Federal Jail by a justice (?) for a nonviolent action during the Women's Pentagon Action. Yes, we appeared to have telephone problems. I cannot document these. We expect these things as a con-

(Continued on Page 179)

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

CONTENTS.

Volume 232, Number 6

COVER
Editorial: Reagantalk, Haigspeak
Stalin Is Dead:
Socialism and the Soviet Bloc — *Daniel Singer*

LETTERS
162 The Protest/Survive File
William Appleman Williams, Robert L. Heilbroner, George Dixon, Charles R. Courtney, Andrew Stiller, William L. Scurrah, Rennie Payne-Ayers

EDITORIALS
163 Memo From Iran
165 Together Again — *Lucinda Franks*
166 *Item. Item. Item.*

ARTICLES
167 McCarthy Time?:
Security and Terrorism — *Victor Navasky*
168 Michigan Opens the Files:
A Blow Against the Red Squads — *Jim Jacobs and Richard Soble*
170 P.R. and the Pill:
Who Says Oral Contraceptives Are Safe? — *Becky O'Malley*
172 The Nylon Curtain Affair:
The Book That Du Pont Hated — *Robert Sherrill*

BOOKS & THE ARTS
181 Mansbridge: Beyond Adversary Democracy — *Charles Beitz*
182 Early Pompeian (poem) — *Derek Walcott*
184 Bailey: America, Lost and Found — *Richard Lingeman*
184 Marzani: The Promise of Eurocommunism — *Staughton Lynd*
186 Theater — *Stephen Harvey*
188 Films — *Robert Hatch*

Drawings by Monica Incisa

Editor, Victor Navasky

Executive Editor, Richard Lingeman; *Associate Editor,* Kai Bird; *Assistant Editor,* Amy Wilentz; *Literary Editor,* Richard Pollak; *Poetry Editor,* Grace Schulman; *Copy Editor,* Patricia Dowling; *Assistant Copy Editor,* Sydne Silverstein; *Editorial Assistants,* Elena Brunet, Barbara Dudley Davis; *Editorial Secretary,* Ola Lyon.

Departments: Architecture, Jane Holtz Kay; *Art,* Lawrence Alloway; *Dance,* Nancy Goldner; *Films,* Robert Hatch; *Indigenous Music,* Nat Hentoff; *Music,* David Hamilton; *Television,* Peter Sourian; *White House Correspondent,* Robert Sherrill. *Correspondents: Bonn,* C. Amery; *Canberra,* C.P. Fitzgerald; *Latin America,* Penny Lernoux; *London,* Raymond Williams; *Paris,* Claude Bourdet; *Columnists and Regular Contributors:* Calvin Trillin (*Variations*), Thomas Ferguson & Joel Rogers (*The Political Economy*). *Contributing Editor,* Blair Clark. *Editorial Board:* James Baldwin, Norman Birnbaum, Richard Falk, Frances FitzGerald, Philip Green, Robert Lekachman, Sidney Morgenbesser, Aryeh Neier, Elizabeth Pochoda, Marcus G. Raskin, A.W. Singham, Roger Wilkins, Alan Wolfe.

Publisher, Hamilton Fish

Advertising Manager, Lindsey Weinraub; *Business Manager,* Ann B. Epstein; *Art/Production Manager,* Jane Sharples; *Assistant to Publisher,* Karen Polk; *Classified,* Eric Etheridge; *Receptionist,* Greta Loell; *Mail Clerk,* John Holtz; *Administrative Secretary,* Shirley Sulat; *Nation Associates,* Claudine Bacher; *Nation News Service,* Jeff Sorensen; *Publishing Consultant,* Jack Berkowitz.

The Nation (ISSN 0027-8378) is published weekly (except for the first week in January, and biweekly in July and August) by Nation Enterprises and © 1981 in the U.S.A. by the Nation Associates, Inc., 72 Fifth Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10011. Tel.: 212-242-8400. *Subscription Mail Address:* Nation Subscription Service, P.O. Box 1953, Marion, Ohio 43302. Second-class postage paid at New York, N.Y., and at additional mailing offices. International Telex: 667 155 NATION.

Regular Subscription Price: One year, $30; two years, $50; six months, $14. Student rate, $17 a year. Add $5 per year postage for Canada and Mexico; $7 other foreign. All foreign subscriptions must be paid in equivalent U.S. funds. **Please allow 5-7 weeks for all subscription transactions.**

EDITORIALS.

Memo From Iran

Recently, The New York Times *published a cable, dated August 13, 1979, from Bruce Laingen, chargé d'affaires in Teheran, to Secretary of State Cyrus Vance on "the cultural and psychological qualities" which affect "conducting business in the Persian environment." Laingen goes on to describe the Persian traits that make doing business with them difficult. A few days later, we received an analogous document from the Iranian side. Our source, who must remain confidential, provided us with a translation of the document, which is dated March 1, 1980, but also let us see the original Farsi version. The latter was shown to several Iranian experts, who confirmed that it appeared to be an official document of the Iranian Foreign Ministry. Since the document is directed to President Abolhassan Bani-Sadr, and purports to be written by Sadegh Ghotbzadeh, who at the time was Iran's Foreign Minister, one of our experts cautioned that it may well be a hoax concocted very recently by enemies of the two men in the Islamic Republican Party with the aim of embarrassing them, especially Bani-Sadr, who is currently locked in a power struggle with the clerics. However that may be, we note that in his introduction, Ghotbzadeh expresses his "great concern" that the hostage situation will become a "millstone" to the revolution and harm Iran's standing in the world. He has written the memorandum, he says, to assist Bani-Sadr in bringing negotiations with the Americans to a satisfactory conclusion and "freeing our country from the burden of the spy-hostages." What follows are excerpts from the document dealing with what Ghotbzadeh calls "American character traits pertinent to the negotiations at hand."* —*The Editors*

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

In the Name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful.
Subject: Bargaining With Americans

As Alexis de Tocqueville noted more than a century ago, the American is highly litigious and his institutions are legalistic. Today, lawyers proliferate in America, and the courts are clogged with thousands of cases in which people are suing one another over fancied "rights" and grievances. This is of relevance to us because we must be prepared to grapple with the American legalistic mind. The difficulty in such dealings is that Americans, unlike Persians, do not love the human give-and-take of bargaining; rather it is a grim power struggle in which legal niceties, "face" and above all "victory" are uttermost. At the same time, such are the complexities of the legal mind, this victory can easily be claimed under a wide variety of *pro forma* pretexts. So long as the arcane technicalities of American law—a welter of ancient Anglo-Saxon precedents going back a thousand years, caught up in a tangle of modern bureaucratic regulations—are deferred to, almost any result can be justified.

With this in mind we must look more deeply into the American character. The litigiousness Tocqueville remarked has its roots in the American's extreme individualism, which results in a kind of "don't tread on me" truculence, a chronic defiance of authority. This trait is exemplified in movie cowboys and "private eyes." An emblematic figure in this connection is the movie tough guy, which the actor Humphrey Bogart often played. He is always a loner; his motto is, "Nobody pushes me around." But this attitude is not confined to popular entertainment. It is operative in the highest councils of state, where admiration is reserved for those who are "hard-liners" or "hard-noses." Richard Nixon's statement that America must not be a "pitiful, helpless giant" is, in this light, a profound *cri de coeur.*

Yet, the American character is shot through with contradictions and paradoxes. While they value ruthlessness in business and diplomacy, Americans are sentimental about human lives—so long as this sentimentality does not get in the way of "looking out for number one," of business success, or victory in war. Indeed, Americans are able to compartmentalize the idea of death in their minds so that under certain circumstances it becomes tolerable, even desirable. Americans are indifferent to the annual slaughter of 50,000 people in traffic deaths on their highways, or the 40,000 or so homicides every year. In war, they resist any regret over innocent lives lost, an example being their indifference to the thousands of civilians killed in the atom bombings of Japan during World War II. This callous attitude was melded with the profit-and-loss business mentality during the Vietnam War. At that time, the American military issued daily "body counts" of enemy soldiers killed to provide a favorable balance sheet on an otherwise losing effort.

In short, Americans can remain indifferent to the deaths of strangers, whether their own people or others. If they were not, they would attempt to prevent some of those deaths—by gun-control laws, for example, or stricter safety standards on the highway. But such restrictions would go against the grain of American individualism. This is a country in which many believe they have a sacred right to own a gun or to drive as fast as they like on the highways.

Relating this to the present dispute between us and the United States, we can expect that the aggressive and sentimental sides of the American character will alternately emerge throughout the negotiations. The sentimental side, for example, may be expected to erupt in a great outpouring of affection for the spy-hostages (while remaining totally indifferent to the sufferings of the Iranian people under the Shah). The significance of this lies in how it will affect the conduct of the American politicians—primarily Jimmy Carter, who will identify his Presidency with the outpourings of concern for the spy-hostages.

But this tactic carries dangers. On our part, the danger is that the fate of the spy-hostages will become an overriding obsession of American policy. American frustration and feelings of impotence—of "being pushed around"—will build. This will in turn increase the pressure on Jimmy Carter to "do something" and limit his negotiating options. Eventually, we may expect him to bow to public pressure and take some rash action. This will involve sanctions, military posturing and the like, but a rescue attempt cannot be ruled out. . . . The loss of American lives in such a gesture will be considered by Washington to be an acceptable price by cost-benefit criteria. (Iranian lives, of course, will not be factored into these calculations.)

The profit motive is supreme with Americans, so we must keep this in mind in negotiating with them. Perhaps the main obstacle to a settlement will be the large banks, which, following Carter's freeze, impounded $3 billion to $4 billion in Iranian assets as a setoff against debts owed them by Iran. The banks will be in a dilemma: public relations concerns (the main check on the profit motive in American business circles) will dictate that they not appear to be the only obstacle to the freedom of the hostages. Yet business concerns will impel them fiercely to oppose any settlement that deprives them of their profits. Since they are the real rulers of America (witness David Rockefeller's successful intercessions in behalf of the Shah), we must satisfy them.

And so the banks will become pivotal in these negotiations. They will take a possessive attitude toward the money of ours that they hold as setoffs against their loans (contractual claims by private companies can be put off by the American Government, of course, but the banks are, *faute de mieux*, party to the negotiations since they actually have Iranian funds). And so the haggling over how much interest we owe the banks on their loans to the Shah, and how much they owe us for the additional money they are holding, will become crucial. The danger is that these purely financial negotiations could become an affair of state, involving American honor. If the banks feel they are being asked to give up too much, then they can brand the settlement "blackmail." Thus, we might make an initially outrageous demand to give the banks some maneuvering room. They will eventually settle, for they have had the use of our money to lend out at high interest if the dispute drags on

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

(likewise the lawyers will be rolling up high fees), so they will agree to reasonable terms in the assurance that they emerged from the entire affair with a profit. Thus profit and honor, which are identical to the American business mind, will be served. As the American folk saying has it: "A pleasure doing business with you."

Together Again

We have been greeting the return of the hostages like urchins cheering the slaying of the child-eating monster at the end of a Grimm's fairy tale. Stardust in our eyes, we have fallen into a sweet slumber, convinced that there is no more evil lurking (the child never asks about the devoured children nor whether the beast will return in another guise) and everything is right with the world.

Beaten up and shamed for two decades by our own political folly, it is not surprising that we wear an orphan heart on our sleeve. Not even the most hardened cynic failed to shed a tear when our enduring countrymen marched home in a morality drama so pure and uncorrupted that it chased all the tormenting bogymen from our national psyche. Who can begrudge us our catharsis, our moment of distracted glory, our handkerchief in the movies?

It is healthy that we are letting the emotional child in us emerge for a time, but that does not mean that our venerated opinion makers, whom we count upon to represent the hard, cool part of our minds, must also suspend intellect. Such commentators as Eric Sevareid (CBS, retired) and James Wieghart (*The New York Daily News*) have proclaimed that the homecoming has made us aware of our own strength as a nation, of our deep love for our countrymen; that it has ushered in a renewal of pride, unity and, above all, patriotism.

Just what is the nature, we are tempted to ask, of this new-found patriotism, this love of country? It is, in essence, nothing less than a love of victory. Our pride in the red, white and blue is based on what we see when we look in our national mirror. Unlike Britain, which can lose its entire empire without the slightest disturbance to its conviction that it is the gemstone of civilization, and unlike France, whose sense of superiority is as unshakable as the Eiffel Tower, America is as secure in its self-image as an adolescent who doesn't know whether his clothes will still fit tomorrow.

Consider whom we have chosen to make heroes—the men and women who have given us back our right to raise the flag high. Not the eight men who sacrificed their lives; President Reagan acknowledged the survivors of the rescue mission in a kind of embarrassed half-beat during his welcome speech: their hometowns, their sisters and brothers and girlfriends do not flash endlessly across our television screens. Not, say, the missionaries murdered by terrorists in El Salvador; America does not love a martyr. Not, of course, the tens of thousands of maimed, unparaded and ignored Vietnam veterans, whose only ribbons are ribbons of pain. Who are the heroes? Fifty-two bewildered bureaucrats, victims who had as much of a hand in their destinies as winners of the lottery jackpot.

They did not call it the American *Dream* by accident. We have struggled through history unto ultimate victory; our enemies vanquished, the elements tamed. Our huddled masses came to this continent not to try for a better life but to "breathe free." Our very motto is "America's the greatest country on earth; you can be anything you want to be, and if you aren't, it's your own fault." Even Martin Luther King, the leader of our most oppressed minority, saw beyond his people's misery to "the promised land." We are a country whose ideals are breathtaking in their extremes, whose expectations hover on the edge of the fabulous.

"Do I look like a hero?" laughed Victor Tomseth at a mayoral reception after New York's ticker-tape fantasia. The pink flush of being adored covered the hostages' pallor as they drank in our rituals, but they also looked worried and mistrustful. "If I had come back without my limbs or my marbles, or if I had been forced to collaborate with the Iranians in some way, I wonder if there would have been any of this," said one. Kathryn Koob said she knew while in captivity of the existence of the yellow ribbon symbol but never knew there were so many, as if she imagined that the nation had been as festooned with yellow ribbons all year as it was that day. The fact is that, save for a town or two, the profusion of ribbons and placards came out after the Americans' release, not before. As long as it looked like they—and we as a nation—were the losers, the emotion was suppressed; most preferred not to think about it. Afterward, as one placard summed it up so well, it was, simply and magnificently: "America: 52, Iran: 0."

For a country barely 200 years old and *always* a winner, our losses in the last half of this century have been hard to take. As any Vietnam veteran will tell you, we have come to treat our losers as though they do not exist and make of our winners more than they are. As the long winter of our weakness, a time where our will was paralyzed, is now being reinterpreted as a "triumph of patience," so the returnees are a metaphor for the American yearning to emerge from the darkness of struggle into the light of victory.

A New York Times/CBS poll has shown that most of us think "we should ignore Iran and have nothing to do with it." In other words, most of us would prefer not to understand and learn from what happened, nor to ground ourselves in a reality that might prevent future misfortunes. We are content to sleep with the illusion that we are good and mighty, for the face of a winner now glows in our looking glass. Far be it from us to examine how we played the game, it's the fact that we finally won that counts.

LUCINDA FRANKS

Lucinda Franks, the author of Waiting Out a War: The Exile of Private John Picciano *(Coward, McCann & Geoghegan) is currently working on a novel. A former* New York Times *reporter, she won the Pulitzer Prize for National Reporting in 1971.*

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ITEM. ITEM. ITEM.

■ **As a service to *Nation* readers, Andrew Houlding, managing editor of the New Haven and Fairfield *Advocates*, who was last heard from in these pages with a piece on wiretaps ("The Wiring of New Haven," June 7, 1980), has compiled a kind of Self-Defense Catalogue for the Bugged Liberal in the Reagan Era. Anyone who is worried about being tapped, bugged, or otherwise eavesdropped on will be interested in these devices, all of them actually on the market.**

Room Bug Guard (Tech Research Inc., $345). According to T.R.I.'s catalogue, this little wonder "automatically scans the room for low-powered transmitters"—the kind that are planted in rooms or worn by Abscam operatives under their shirts and that record conversations. The Room Bug Guard will silently tip you off if that mysterious stranger conjuring up the treasures of Araby is wired. When your silent beeper goes off, you might start reading him an entire issue of *The American Spectator* or similarly stupefying fare until he beats a retreat.

The Hound Dog (R. B. Clifton, $96). "Sniffs out any transmitter's hidden frequency."

Line Tap Guard (Tech Research Inc., $795). A device that can be clamped on any telephone. A red light comes on if your phone is on an F.B.I. party line.

Tap Proof Telephone (Tech Research Inc., $795). "Looks like an ordinary desk phone and can be used on any telephone line in the world." Its built-in scrambler will "screen out illegal wiretaps and recordings" of all chats with your broker, bookie or control.

Phone Sweep (R. B. Clifton, $138). This "tone-activated phone-line microphone detector" will uncover those annoying little microphones that are concealed in telephone receivers. Clifton's catalogue notes that this kind of bug can no longer legally be sold but so many are now in circulation—purchased through mail-order catalogues presumably like Clifton's—that they're still a menace to privacy. There may be a moral in that.

Telephone Line Analyzer (Tech Research Inc., $895). This is the Cadillac of the debugging world. It tests line voltage, amperage, cable resistance—all instantly displayed on a digital readout—and has an "automatic tone sweep, line listen on/off switch and line radio frequency set." In fact, it does everything but perk coffee. A unique feature is the "special line cleaner which will burn up any telephone wiretap transmitter, automatic tape recording equipment and any device that is not supposed to be on the line." According to an electronics expert, this means a high-voltage zap is sent through the line, which might fry any telephone lineman who happened to be working on your wire at the time, or possibly burn out a few million dollars' worth of the telephone company's equipment.

***Caveat emptor*: Experts in the surveillance business say that legal taps—those placed under a Federal court order—are rarely detectable by any of the above devices.**

■ One would have thought that American businessmen operating in the petroleum plutocracy of Saudi Arabia would be as happy as flies in a sugar bowl, but we recently received a "position paper" from the American Businessmen's Group of Riyadh (A.B.G.R.) that is a litany of woe and special pleading. The A.B.G.R., a group of "senior representatives resident in Riyadh of over 100 major U.S. corporations," claims that American firms are falling behind other nations in the scramble to extract cash from the great Saudi spending machine.

The figures bear them out. Despite America's "special relationship" with the Saudis, U.S. exports to Saudi Arabia declined in 1979. In the lucrative construction field, U.S. firms won only 3 percent of the kingdom's contracts, compared with 9 percent in 1975. Even the American share of military construction contracts has plunged from 35 percent in 1975 to a mere 2 percent in 1979.

How do these intrepid entrepreneurs out on the frontiers of the American empire explain their sagging performance? They blame American laws—not, we should say, petty environmental regulations and the like but more fundamental laws. The Internal Revenue Code, for example, which taxes income earned abroad. Because of this, the A.B.G.R. says, American firms have to pay Americans more, which raises their costs; as a result, they've been hiring English-speaking foreigners.

Other laws they would rather not be bound by include the antitrust laws, the law prohibiting American firms from participating in foreign boycotts (e.g., Saudi Arabia's boycott of products made in Israel) and anti-bribery laws. Finally, other nations have a further advantage because they receive support from their governments, ranging from "effective subsidies to outright ownership, control and supply of labor."

Needless to say, the American firms aren't recommending that they be owned by their Government. Rather, they want the irksome laws changed so as not to apply to them. They also want "financing for American firms which would put them on a competitive footing with foreign firms." This proposed gift basket for the multinational corporations is a veritable cornucopia; even Chrysler couldn't have asked for anything more. Congress will no doubt be taking up the matters bothering the American businessmen in this session. We shall see if they receive their free lunch while Jesse Helms et al. are depriving schoolchildren of theirs, along with food stamps.

■ **In a recent review by John J. O'Connor, *The New York Times* television critic, of a BBC documentary entitled *Goodbye, Gutenberg*, mention is made that "the guide" for this tour of "the dizzying world of communication by computers" is Anthony Smith. O'Connor admits that the "material is not easy to comprehend" but "essential for anyone who wants to understand future events." A fact that O'Connor neglects to mention is that the program is based on the book *Goodbye, Gutenberg* by Anthony Smith. Perhaps he was so dazzled by the computerized future that he wrote off books along with the printing press.**

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ARTICLES.

McCARTHY TIME?

Security and Terrorism

VICTOR NAVASKY

Can it happen again? Are we in for a new wave of McCarthyism, a Reagan repression, Cold War II, a witch hunt 1980s-style, as many on the left suggest? Giving apparent credence to this fear is the creation of the new Security and Terrorism Subcommittee of Senator Strom Thurmond's Judiciary Committee. Its chairman is Jeremiah Denton, Republican of Alabama, the retired admiral who got elected with the strong support of the Moral Majority because, among other things, he spoke of the death penalty for adulterers, said things like "Our military is in the worst shape it has been since George Washington walked around barefoot at Valley Forge" and was a war hero who had spent seven and a half years as a prisoner of war in Vietnam.

Other far-right Republican members of this new subcommittee include the partially disabled John East of North Carolina, whom one Washington civil liberties lawyer has taken to calling "Helms on wheels." And Utah's Orrin Hatch, whose staff aide predicted before Ronald Reagan was elected that the new subcommittee would investigate, among others, the North American Congress on Latin America (NACLA), a research and information center on our neighbors to the South; *Mother Jones*, the San Francisco-based magazine which specializes in ecological muckraking; and the Institute for Policy Studies, the left-oriented Washington think tank which has recently come to prominence as the thinly disguised target of *The Spike*, a polemical best-selling novel.

The jurisdiction of the new subcommittee is still murky, but it appears to include terrorism, subversion, internal security and, if reports of a decision taken at a recent executive session are correct, *all* oversight of the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the Drug Enforcement Administration (both of which formerly fell within the ambit of the Criminal Law Subcommittee, headed by the moderately civil libertarian Senator Charles Mathias, Republican of Maryland). Just where the jurisdiction of the Denton subcommittee stops, and that of Senator Barry Goldwater's Committee on Intelligence starts, is unclear. Or, as one longtime Senate staffer puts it, "The main thing that is unclear is whether the reference to terro in the title of the new subcommittee is a reference to the subjects they intend to investigate or to the reign they intend to inst rate."

Victor Navasky is the editor of The Natio. *and the author of* Naming Names *(Viking), a study of the Hollywood blacklist.*

It is also unclear whether the House, too, will set up such a committee, signifying a revival and replay of the bad old days when Joe McCarthy and his minions, the infamous House Committee on Un-American Activities (name changed to House Committee on Internal Security in 1969, abolished in 1975) and the less notorious Senate Internal Security Subcommittee (abolished in 1977), all worked closely with J. Edgar Hoover's F.B.I. and various other Federal bureaus to ferret out "agents of the Communist conspiracy," to purge the Red taint from the State Department, trade unions, the Army, the church, the entertainment industry, the academy, et al. After all, despite the record of economic, political and psychological devastation compiled by these Red hunters, 150 members supported a resolution introduced by Representative John Ashbrook to establish a similar body in the House last year.

And the authors of the 3,000-page, nine-volume report issued by the Heritage Foundation, whose chapter on intelligence, in addition to calling for the legalization of wiretaps, bugs, breaking and entering, the placement of informers in dissident organizations and the exemption of the intelligence agencies from the Freedom of Information Act, also requested "the restoration of some Congressional body with similar functions [to the invaluable HUAC and SISS]" as "a necessary part of an adequate internal security program." That this clarion call to give "national safety" priority over civil liberty wherever the two are in tension is taken seriously by the Reagan Administration may be gathered from the participation of Edwin Meese 3d, the President's new chief counsel, in Heritage Foundation deliberations. Meese has been quoted as saying the Administration will "rely heavily" on the report. [See Jay Peterzell, "Unleashing the Dogs of McCarthyism," *The Nation*, January 17.]

My own sense is that history will not quite repeat itself. The power of such committees to stigmatize and punish by name-naming and name-calling had pretty much played itself out by the late '50s. And by the early '60s various committee targets had figured out new and sometimes successful strategies to embarrass and undermine their tormentors, such as appearing in costume, or the precedent of those members of Women Strike for Peace who, when called before the committee in 1962, packed the hall with women and children, bringing flowers for all the witnesses.

Then, too, despite the new and troubling (and C.I.A.-inspired?) media obsession with K.G.B. "moles" and "disinformation," neither Reagan nor his New Right cadres and lobbyists have made the internal Communist menace a dominant theme, although their emphasis on the Soviet threat has domestic reverberations. Partly this is because today's left is more open than secret. Also, there are no contemporary equivalents of the great political "spy" cases of the cold-war years (Judith Coplon, Alger Hiss, Ethel and Julius Rosenberg) which so conveniently facilitated the exploitation of nativist fears of a "foreign conspiracy." Then, too, with China as our new ally it is no

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

longer credible to portray Communism as an "international monolith." (All of these reasons and others may explain why "terrorism" has replaced "Communism" as the rallying cry in the vocabulary of the new investigators.) And the post-Watergate media, despite the increasing concentration of ownership and the self-censorship many news organizations still practice, can't be counted on not to blow the whistle on new demagogues, should they assert themselves.

That does not mean that organizations like the Institute for Policy Studies or *Covert Action*, which regularly publishes the names of C.I.A. agents, or organs of dissent, centers of public interest, feminists and gay activists believed to be part of a '60s-bred conspiracy against the nuclear family, have nothing to fear. Even though the new subcommittee on terrorism appears to lack subpoena power (that requires a two-thirds vote of the entire Judiciary Committee, and preliminary counts suggest that the votes may not be there), some witnesses may indeed face the agonizing choices of whether to insist (at the possible risk of being held in contempt) on the right to silence, whether to invoke the First or Fifth Amendments, whether to "name names," or whether to try to seize the day and use the occasion as an educational forum.

Denton may not be as glory-seeking as McCarthy or as reckless as J. Parnell Thomas, the HUAC chairman who ended up in the same prison (for taking kickbacks) as members of the Hollywood Ten who had been sent there for defying him. In fact, sensitive to rumors that he is insufficiently sensitive to civil liberties issues, he has confided to colleagues that he intends to consult with Senator Mathias on such matters; but that does not mean the existence of his subcommittee and its inquiries will not contribute to anti-democratic forces and mood—that they will not serve as a source of inspiration to state and local Red squads and private vigilante groups such as the Ku Klux Klan, Omega-7 and such relatively respectable operations as the Heritage Foundation itself and the American Security Council.

In McCarthy's time, the most telling criticisms of the investigating committees were that they were exceeding their jurisdiction, that they were engaged in exposure for exposure's sake, that they had no legitimate legislative purpose, since under the First Amendment Congress can make no law abridging freedom of speech. These criticisms had resonance because the committees *were* in the thought-control business, the hearings *were* degradation ceremonies, the investigators already *did* have the names they were allegedly seeking and no significant legislation ever came out of these irresponsible expeditions.

But it would be a mistake to assume that this time around the issues will be as clear-cut. The Heritage Foundation report can be said to constitute a real legislative agenda. Hearings on such legislation could not be dismissed as "exposure for exposure's sake." And no matter how many liberal constitutional lawyers argue before the courts that much of such legislation violates the fact and spirit of the protected freedoms, the Burger Court, perhaps adorned by some Reagan appointees, cannot be counted on to be responsive.

The Security and Terrorism Subcommittee ought to be monitored, then, not so much out of fear that Denton will wield McCarthy's old smear brush while William Webster's F.B.I. apes J. Edgar Hoover's old tricks. The real danger is, rather, the lateral encouragement the Administration and the new subcommittee may give to private, quasi-public and non-Federal repressive forces—and no less important, an enhanced temptation to dignify the corrupt. It seems no mere coincidence that in 1956, which was around the time the investigating committees began to lose their sting, the F.B.I. developed its most objectionable, brutal and illegal program—COINTELPRO. Having lost the power to punish by publicity, the state, it can be argued, resorted to direct, extralegal, in some cases violent (as in the use of *agents provocateurs*) punishment. The danger represented by the new Security and Terrorism boys is that they will move, with the support of the Administration, to legitimize the illegitimate, to make respectable that which was previously done only undercover because it was fundamentally shameful. □

MICHIGAN OPENS THE FILES

A Blow Against The Red Squads

JIM JACOBS AND RICHARD SOBLE

A week after the 1980 Presidential election, approximately 38,000 people received unusual letters from the Michigan State Police notifying them that the police had maintained files on their "political" activities. If the recipients would complete the enclosed forms, they would receive the contents of their files. This mass notification, the first ever ordered by American courts, has shaken the U.S. intelligence community and represents a major stride toward ending intelligence abuses in the 1980s.

The notification was the result of a lengthy lawsuit, *Benkert* v. *State of Michigan*. The court action was initiated in early 1974 by a consumer group—the Michigan Association for Consumer Protection—when it learned that members of the Michigan Senate had received information concerning its activities and the background of its leadership from the Michigan State Police Intelligence Unit. They promptly sued to block further such actions by the police. A number of local political activists later joined the suit, and it was expanded to include the activities of the Detroit Police Department's "Red Squad." The suit argued that such units should be disbanded and their files made available to those whom they had spied on.

Jim Jacobs teaches at Macomb County Community College and is a plaintiff in Benkert *v.* State of Michigan. *Richard Soble is an attorney in the case. He is also president of the Detroit chapter of the National Lawyers Guild.*

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

While the lawsuit focused on specific charges, the existence of the local intelligence agencies has long been known to progressive and left circles in Michigan. The Detroit Red Squad has its origins in the pre-World War I period when local government aided the emerging automobile industry in keeping unions out. In recent years the targets of the Detroit Red Squad shifted from unions, ethnic groups and left political parties to black organizations, student and anti-war groups. Following the 1967 "civil disorder," the Detroit police's interest in political activity in the Detroit black community increased. At its height, in the early 1970s, the unit numbered fifty officers.

The Michigan State Police Intelligence Unit was officially established in 1948 as part of a major effort by the governor to root out "subversives" in state government and industry. Not only did it gather information about individuals, it also investigated applicants for state jobs and even performed the same service for private corporations. While the activities of the unit were secret, each year the Michigan State Police Annual Report would contain a brief paragraph written by the commander detailing the growing threat of subversion to Michigan. In the 1970s, as the issue of subversives in government dwindled in popularity, the unit turned its attention to surveillance of rock festivals around the state.

Despite their long history and widespread awareness that these units were important front-line organizations gathering information and passing it on to the Federal Bureau of Investigation and other national intelligence units, there were few legal avenues open to expose or halt their activities. In addition, the Freedom of Information Act did not cover local police, so their files remained unavailable for inspection. The *Benkert* case was initiated to spur the process of bringing local intelligence agencies under public scrutiny.

Launched closely on the heels of the Watergate scandal, the suit was immediately successful. The state law upon which the state police political surveillance unit was organized was declared unconstitutional and the unit disbanded. The Detroit Red Squad was also abolished. Moreover, the suit had an important spinoff in the form of investigations by the Michigan legislature into state police surveillance for private industry. These resulted in a state law giving the employees access to their personal files and the right to have all nonwork-related information purged from them. In Detroit, the *Benkert* case exposed the relationship between the police and the Law Enforcement Intelligence Unit, a semi-private surveillance organization. The City Council ordered the Detroit Police Department to break its ties with the L.E.I.U.

One major unresolved issue, however, was the disposition of the files. The state and city authorities wanted them destroyed, while the plaintiffs argued for the fullest exposure possible. One of the main purposes of the lawsuit was to bring intelligence operations out into the open, exposing the relationships among intelligence agencies, employers and other institutions as well as the repression suffered by left-wing groups in Michigan. The files provide a historic record that will help combat intelligence abuses in the future.

After two years of negotiation, the settlement agreement was announced last November. It goes a long way toward achieving the goals of the plaintiffs. First, and most important, it opens the state police files on a scale that is unprecedented in American legal history. For the first time an intelligence agency was made responsible both for notifying organizations and individuals that it had files on them, and for duplicating these materials. (In contrast, the F.O.I.A. regulations place on the individual the burden of seeking his files and keeping abreast of the complex notification process.) All the paperwork, including financial charges for duplication, will devolve upon the state. In addition to sending out letters to those concerned, the state was ordered to take ads in Michigan newspapers telling people they could apply for their files.

Second, unlike the files released on the Federal level, which often contain whole pages deleted for "national security" reasons, there will be only three types of excisions permitted in the files released by the state police. They are the names of informers and police officers, and any remarks of a "highly personal nature" concerning other people in an individual's file. People who receive their Michigan files will be getting the most uncensored investigative reports in recent history.

Third, although there is a cutoff date for applications, all files will be preserved for a period of time so that the original documents will be available as evidence in any subsequent damage suits. The plaintiffs will also make an effort to insure that the files that are released will be preserved in an archive or special-collections library as a historical record of the entire dismal episode.

DRAWINGS BY MONICA INCISA

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

To date, only the 38,000 individuals who were investigated by the Michigan State Police have received notice of the existence of their political surveillance files. In December 1980, Judge James Montante ordered the city of Detroit to mail out notices to some 110,000 individuals on whom its police have maintained files since the 1930s.

The reaction of the intelligence agencies to all this has been to delay as much as possible. After the notification letters were mailed, the Michigan State Police announced that it would be at least four years before people actually received their files. The state police commander claimed that the 405,000 microfilm pages making up Michigan's political intelligence files could be copied at a rate of only twenty-two pages an hour, meaning that it would take four and a half years to recopy all the files. And Michigan's Attorney General raised the old crime bogy as a pretext for delay. "Think how much more important it is to have safety in the streets than to return those files," he said.

The Detroit Police Department submitted an equally dilatory projection. It would take them six months just to complete a computer tape listing the names and addresses of the individuals to whom notice should be sent, it said. Moreover, because of recent layoffs of police officers, it would be years before the actual files could be copied and released. Because its main interest was in stalling, the city did not send out its joint notices at the time the state did. This decision to act independently was a sharp departure from the normal practice of information sharing between city and state intelligence units, and elicited a caustic reaction from the presiding judge in the case, James Montante: "I fail to see why the taxpayers—and I'm one of them—should finance this needless expenditure caused by city bureaucrats' failure to combine with the state police."

Still another opportunity for foot-dragging arose when the F.B.I. announced that it might intervene to prevent the release of the files until it could review them all for information that might reveal the Bureau's informers or investigative techniques. This review would delay release an additional two years. The F.B.I.'s announcement served to underscore one of the plaintiffs' major political points—the close interrelationship of the intelligence agencies. The identity of informers and the techniques used in obtaining political information, they believe, should be a part of public record, and so they will vigorously resist the F.B.I.'s interference.

But any further stalling tactics by the intelligence agencies will probably not find much public sympathy. The notification letters from the state police have already gone out, and the mailing list includes some very prominent people in Michigan political circles, including state legislators, United Automobile Workers officials and Detroit councilmen. The Michigan State Police even compiled a file on former Congressman David Stockman, now director of the Office of Management and Budget. In addition to this political elite, literally hundreds of people have called, wanting to know "what they are guilty of." The notification process has created a powerful constituency of people demanding to see their files.

Finally, the delaying tactics will face the organized opposition of the plaintiffs and their friends. They plan a conference at which information contained in the files will be shared. The plaintiffs will also push for specific legislation at both the city and state levels to abolish surveillance of noncriminal activities of citizens. And they will continue to investigate and expose the interrelationship between the public and private surveillance process, with particular emphasis on its development within the automobile industry.

It is ironic that the notifications began to go out right after the election of Ronald Reagan, whose closest advisers seem fairly certain to rejuvenate the Federal intelligence program. This will in turn cause a rise in state and local activity. Thus, the resolution of the Michigan case may have considerable ramifications for the future of the intelligence movement as a whole. This could be the first test of President Reagan's promise to get government off the backs of people. □

P.R. AND THE PILL

Who Says Oral Contraceptives Are Safe?

BECKY O'MALLEY

"Ten Year Study Reassesses Risks of Oral Contraceptive Use" read a banner headline on a public relations news release that went out to the print and electronic media in the United States and Canada last October. The release proclaimed the results of the Walnut Creek Contraceptive Study, an in-depth research effort carried out at the Kaiser-Permanente Medical Center in California, and funded by the National Institutes of Health (N.I.H.).

According to this press release, "Certain health risks which have been linked to the use of birth control pills may be exaggerated." The release went on to report that "the main conclusion from the study is that in a U.S. population of young, adult, white, middle-class women, the risks of OC [oral contraceptive] use are negligible." Predictably, the media focused on the "negligible," and omitted the disclaimers. United Press International's headline for the story was typical: "Birth Control Pills Are Called Safe."

Where did that original press release come from? Not, as one might expect, from the Walnut Creek study or its research director, Dr. Savitri Ramcharan. Instead, the release was put out by the public relations firm Hill &

Becky O'Malley is a staff writer at the Center for Investigative Reporting, and director of the center's project on science and technology.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Knowlton for G.D. Searle and Company, the developers of Enovid, the first commercial Pill. The release was apparently a capsulized version of a summary report presented at the First Annual John Rock Commemorative Symposium by Drs. Ramcharan and Frederick Pellegrin, Walnut Creek's principal investigators. The symposium, which brought together an assortment of past and present oral contraceptive researchers, was funded by none other than G.D. Searle. Its tone was typified by one doctor's encomium on the joys of working "in the industrial complex" at G.D. Searle in the first halcyon days of developing a "marketable product."

Ever since that "marketable product" was produced for mass consumption, there has been controversy over its safety. Dr. Ramcharan, when asked to comment on the Searle release, said, "No easy answers. That's what I'd like the headlines to say." Other health experts echoed her caution, or elaborated on it. Dr. Philip Corfman, director of the Center for Population Research of the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development, described the Searle/Hill & Knowlton press campaign as "smelly." "It's free enterprise in action," he said. "I don't think anyone's doing anything illegal, but there's sure a lot that's been unethical."

Corfman also objected to the key sentence in the release calling the risks of Pill use "negligible." "It's full of so many qualifications, that sentence, that it's essentially useless," he said. "I think that kind of conclusion is foolish and dangerous. . . . There is nothing in the Walnut Creek study that makes us feel better about the Pill."

Barbara Seaman, author of *The Doctors' Case Against the Pill* (Dolphin, 1969), the first American exposé of the hazards of birth-control pills, was extremely concerned about the implications of the pharmaceutical industry's new pro-Pill press campaign. With the help of the National Women's Health Network, of which she is a co-founder, she prepared and circulated an adversarial press packet, along with a statement charging Searle/Hill & Knowlton with "a carefully orchestrated, Machiavellian campaign" to resell the Pill to American women. (After Seaman's book was published and the Federal Drug Administration put warnings on Pill packaging, usage dropped from a peak of 14 million women to a low of 4 million.)

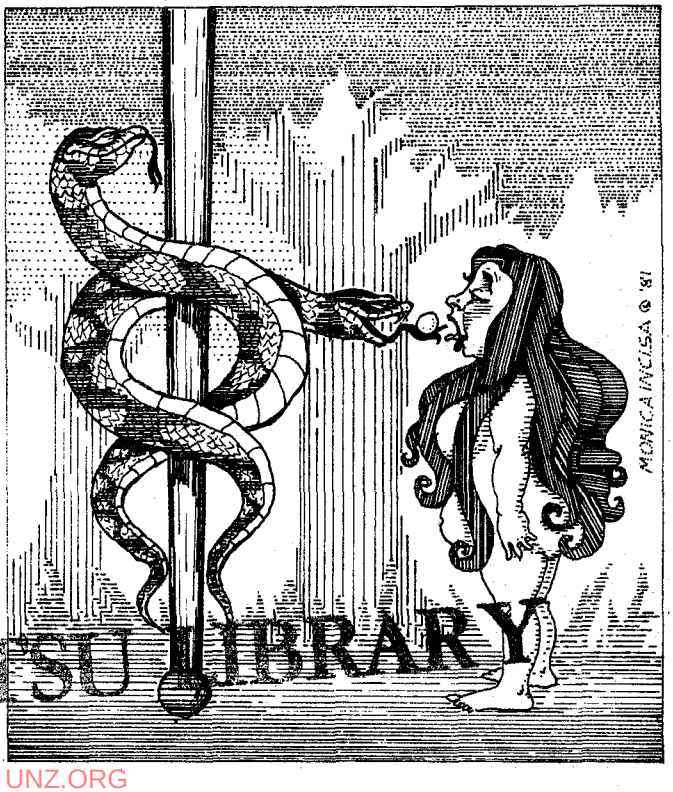
Along with other specialists and doctors, Seaman also characterized the Walnut Creek study itself as a "grotesquely flawed and incompetent piece of work." "The records and the interviews were amazingly shoddy. Almost 4 percent of the women were of 'unknown status' when they entered the study. Translated, this means that despite the $4.34 million . . . spent, the researchers didn't even know whether 4 percent of the subjects had ever taken the Pill."

Although the third and final volume of the study is still being printed by the N.I.H., Seaman agreed with Dr. Martin Vesey of Oxford University, the principal investigator in the British study which originally discovered the hazards of the Pill. Vesey has written a critique in which he differs with many of the conclusions the Walnut Creek authors draw from their data. He points out that the study provides very little information on women during their years on the Pill. Of the 107,000 woman/years the study covers, only 20,000 woman/years reflect women currently taking the Pill; the rest are "past-users" or "never-users." Thus, only one out of five woman/years was actually spent on the Pill. Vesey therefore warns against the study's conclusions minimizing the risk of Pill-related cardiovascular disease, since existing medical evidence links this hazard only to *current* use, and current use makes up only one-fifth of the data base of the Walnut Creek study. Dr. Vesey's critique will be published as an appendix to Volume III of the Walnut Creek study.

Dr. Shanna Swan, who teaches advanced epidemiology at the University of California at Berkeley, was senior biostatistician on the study from 1970 to 1974. Having read an interim version of the study's final volume, she too agreed with Vesey. "When you lump together current users and past users, and you're looking for an effect that is present only in current use in one case per 100,000—if you have only 20,000 woman/years of current use, you can't see it."

Although Dr. Ramcharan said there were "no easy answers" about the risks of oral birth control, in an interview at Walnut Creek she stood by the wording of the Searle/Hill & Knowlton press release. Her co-author and principal investigator, Dr. Pellegrin, gave the release a more qualified endorsement: "If you take white females, middle class, residing in Walnut Creek [California] and they don't smoke, then the risk of OCs is negligible. . . . It's too bad that it sounds like it's across the board." Pellegrin called the Searle-financed Hill & Knowlton P.R. campaign "a legitimate thing that is done by all the drug companies."

There are those, however, who take issue with this conception of legitimacy. Dr. Peter Rheinstein, former director of the F. D. A.'s Division of Drug Advertising, took a dim



ETSU LIBRARY

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

view of Searle's publicity campaign. "It is deceptive," Rheinstein said, "for companies to prepare materials and circulate them in a way they expect will result in their being reprinted or broadcast anonymously in the media."

Barbara Seaman also charges that Dr. Ramcharan had previous financial and other ties with G.D. Searle and Company, which, along with Pill manufacturers Mead Johnson, Ortho, Parke-Davis and Syntex, contributed $150,000 to the Walnut Creek study in 1975. Ramcharan's *vita* indicates that she worked with Dr. Gregory Pincus, a longtime Searle consultant, evaluating Enovid (Searle's version of the Pill) from 1957 through 1959.

Moreover, Don Buggrabe, a Searle spokesman, admits that Searle paid the travel expenses of both Ramcharan and Pellegrin for the John Rock Commemorative Symposium in Philadelphia, as well as paying for a trip to New York for Dr. Ramcharan. And Dr. Pellegrin said that Wyeth International, a Canadian distributor of the Pill, paid for Dr. Ramcharan to appear in Toronto at a Canadian Fertility Society press conference. Wyeth set up the conference, it seemed, in order to refute a recent investigative story in *The Toronto Star* on the health risks of the Pill.

The headline on the release issued for that Toronto conference was even cheerier than the Hill & Knowlton U.S. version: "The Pill in a New Perspective: Pill Users Healthier than Non-Users." Dr. Patrick Taylor of Calgary was quoted as calling the Walnut Creek study "the best news for Canadian women, whether past, present, or future users of oral contraceptives, since the introduction of the Pill in 1960."

This kind of superlative clearly has more to do with advertising than it does with medical accuracy. "The pills are risky," Dr. Swan reiterated. "For some women they are *very* risky." She estimates that in the fifteen years during which the Pill has been widely used, it has been responsible for at least 20,000 deaths—an estimate she calls "conservative." She said she believes that if the Walnut Creek data are ever properly and adequately analyzed, they will confirm previous findings of oral contraceptive hazards. If women are provided with accurate information on the Pill, Swan said, they will be able to make an educated decision about contraception. But if they are fed misinformation, they may make risky, or even fatal, choices. What better way to sell your product than to claim that it has been endorsed by a federally funded team of experts who researched the problem for more than a decade? It's as if the tobacco companies quoted the Surgeon General as saying: "Smokers Healthier than Non-Smokers."

"Most women," Seaman said, "don't want to die for love." But if pharmaceutical companies continue to mask the dangers of the Pill with excessively optimistic press releases, more will. At least when the next round of Pill-related deaths hits the headlines, women will have a better idea of whom to blame. □

"Protest and Survive"
Low Prices for Bulk Orders!

This special issue of *The Nation* devoted entirely to E. P. Thompson's profound and eloquent essay on the present danger of nuclear war is available at bulk rates. Handsomely illustrated with the brilliant drawings of Marshall Arisman, it is a scathing refutation of those who teach that nuclear war is survivable —even winnable. Schools, political groups, clubs and other organizations may take advantage of the following discount rates.

____10 copies $8 ____100 copies $50
____50 copies $30 ____1,000 copies $300

Name _____
Address _____
City _____
State _____ Zip _____

Please make check or money order payable to *The Nation*. 72 Fifth Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10011.

THE NYLON CURTAIN AFFAIR

The Book That Du Pont Hated

ROBERT SHERRILL

The questions are these: Would an outfit like E. I. du Pont de Nemours & Company, with all its billion-dollar industrial problems to worry about, take the time to interfere with the sale of a critical book by an unknown author? And if it did, would such reputable organizations as Prentice-Hall Inc. and Book-of-the-Month Club, which presumably are on the side of freedom of expression, be so sleazy as to bow to Du Pont pressures?

For reasons that will be explained, Gerard C. Zilg, 34, a resident of New York City, has spent most of the past five years brooding over those two questions and he long ago came to the conclusion that in both instances the answer is yes.

It is not difficult to understand why he broods. His career has been stalled; he has suffered financially. Yet in his very first book, *Du Pont: Behind the Nylon Curtain*, published by Prentice-Hall in 1974, he almost made the big time, almost got to wallow in the sudsy riches and boozy renown of a best seller. All that passed him by when (or so he contends) he was rolled over, squashed, flattened by one of America's biggest corporations.

He has filed a $5 million lawsuit against Du Pont and Prentice-Hall, and early this spring the case will go to trial. Zilg will contend that Prentice-Hall was under contractual obligation to Zilg to promote his book in good faith and

Robert Sherrill is The Nation*'s White House correspondent.*

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

that it did not do so. He accuses Du Pont of having been the cause of this alleged breach of contract.

Zilg's is not a frivolous lawsuit, but it is unusual. Ronald DePetris, the writer's attorney, says, "The case presents an important claim involving interference with contractual relations in the context of the First Amendment. Is an author's freedom of expression to be curtailed by pressure upon his publisher by the subject of the book involved, where the book on the basis of sales, reviews, serialization and selection by a book club promises to be a success financially and otherwise?"

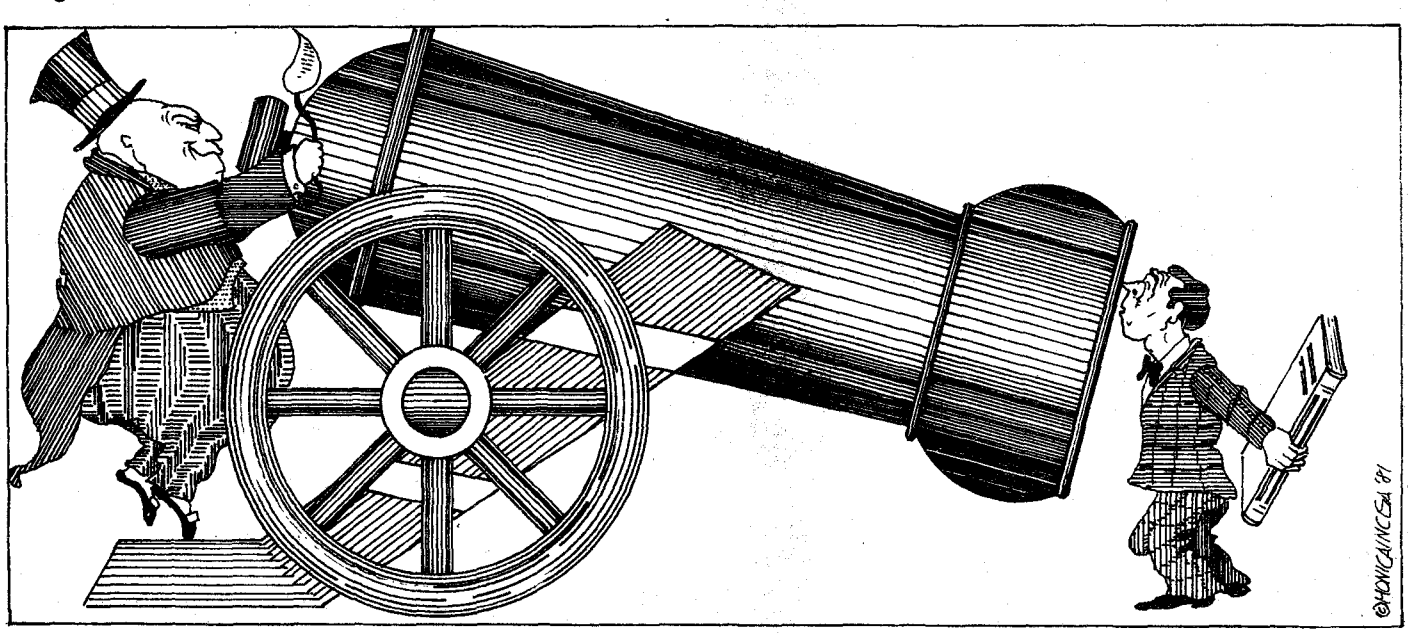
If Zilg is successful, the results just might make life a great deal easier for all writers of critical books about corporations; this would not be the first time that big business has found ways to influence downward the sales of books that it wanted to suppress.

Lawsuits are big business's favorite technique for chilling free speech, since few publishing houses and virtually no writer can stand the expense of extended litigation. To inject a personal note, in 1976, McDonnell Douglas Corporation sued *The New York Times* and me for $25 million in defamation damages because of a favorable review of the book *Destination Disaster*, which was pegged to the McDonnell Douglas DC-10 crash outside Paris that cost 346 lives. A year later Nat Hentoff investigated the lawsuit's results and reported in *Inquiry*: "Some months after the filing of that libel action by McDonnell Douglas, a lawyer for *The Times* checked to see how many reviews of the book had appeared in other publications following the date of the announcement of the action. He found exceedingly few reviews. 'I think it's rather obvious,' the lawyer said, 'why McDonnell Douglas brought that action against us. They never really expected to win, but they've accomplished their purpose.'" After the book was effectively dead, McDonnell Douglas dropped its lawsuit.

Gerard Zilg's unhappy experience with corporate pressure came about in this way. While attending the State University of New York, he took time off to work as a press aide to Congressman John Dow of New York, one of those unusual politicians who opposed the Vietnam War even when it was still popular with the public. Among other duties, Zilg helped write the Congressman's press statements. An inveterate history buff, Zilg put his considerable research talents to work for Dow at the Library of Congress, finding proof that Vietnam was just the latest in a series of foolish engagements into which the United States was manipulated by the extreme corporate right wing.

During one of his forays into the library stacks, Zilg stumbled upon what he calls "one of the most bizarre plots in American history"—the attempt by the American Liberty League to forcibly overthrow the Administration of Franklin Roosevelt and, with it, the Government of the United States. The American Liberty League was supported by numerous corporations. Du Pont was one of them. Once Zilg had seen what was under that rock, he had a mission. It was to write the definitive history of the amazing du Pont clan, and he would spend the next several years doing just that. First, he quit his job in Washington and went back to college. After graduating in 1970, he headed for Delaware, the du Ponts' home base, to start digging. It was the right place to go, for the Du Pont Company virtually owned the state. It ran the legislature, owned two of the four major banks, dominated the press either through outright ownership or as a major advertiser, ruled most of the colleges and universities through heavy-handed largess and controlled most of the major law firms and the judiciary (in the words of one member of the du Pont family, "Delaware has judges who provide a good business climate").

To say that the du Ponts and their functionaries refused to cooperate in supplying any information to Zilg is putting it mildly indeed. In 1973, Zilg wrote to Irénée du Pont Jr., then senior vice president of Du Pont, requesting an interview for his book. Du Pont not only refused but instructed his underlings to begin an investigation of Zilg. Internal corporate memos obtained by Zilg's attorneys show that one informant identified Zilg as a "professional radical" and "an allegedly militant activist in attempting to organize GM labor forces." (That informant turned out to be the author



LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

of a highly favorable book on the du Ponts who apparently didn't care for Zilg's competition.)

Despite the total lack of cooperation from anyone in the du Pont family or in the Du Pont corporation, Zilg produced a book that was a masterpiece of comprehensiveness. As John Barkham later wrote in his review: "Zilg's impressive study is crammed with facts and figures, many of them uncomplimentary to the du Ponts. Though several information sources were mysteriously closed to him, he seems to have gleaned more about the du Ponts than any previous writer."

The book portrays Du Pont as the nation's oldest and most successful munitions industry, a company that waxed gloriously fat on war. Zilg shows how the Napoleonic Wars and U.S. Government contracts kept the company alive during its fledgling years, how the War of 1812 gave it enough profits to keep it running for the next two decades, how the Mexican War and the Crimean War carried it through the 1840s and the 1850s, how the Civil War gave it enough money to build its trust, how the Spanish-American War provided Du Pont a monopoly on smokeless powder, how Du Pont supplied 40 percent of all the explosives used by the Allies in World War I and thereby earned more in those four years than it had earned in 126 years of peacetime business. In short, the stench of war profiteering hangs very heavy over the pages of Zilg's book.

The patriotism of Du Pont is also called into question, at least by implication, in Zilg's account of the corporation's cooperation with German spies in 1930 and its involvement with German rearmament. It had an arrangement with I.G. Farben, the kingpin of the Nazi war machine, by which Farben could inspect Du Pont formulas.

Several members of the du Pont family are rather unfavorably portrayed by Zilg. He reminds his readers, for example, of Senator Coleman du Pont's connection with the Teapot Dome scandal and a variety of Florida land frauds. As the Teapot Dome investigation got under way, Coleman resigned from the Senate and dribbled out his life at home "amusing himself by fingering fine laces and watching mechanical toys."

We are introduced to Fred du Pont, murdered in a Louisville, Kentucky, whorehouse, and Sam du Pont, who used his wife as the target for his knife-throwing. Some of the du Ponts are profiled by Zilg in ways that suggest they were, to put it kindly, not very bright. Felix du Pont performed with such embarrassing stupidity during the Senate munitions investigations of the 1930s that he was quietly shelved by the rest of the family and, writes Zilg, "Felix rose no higher in the company, having to content himself with playing baritone horn for the Wilmington police band."

Du Pont: Behind the Nylon Curtain was, in short, not the sort of book that the du Ponts were likely to buy by the gross and distribute at Christmas. But most objective outsiders were convinced of its high quality. Other reviewers besides Barkham would take note of its scholarship and anecdotal riches. *The Library Journal*, for instance, said it was "as much an economic history of the U.S. as it is a history of this family."

Both outside and in-house readers for the Book-of-the-Month Club (BOMC) apparently responded to Zilg's work in much the same way, for they recommended that *Du Pont* be purchased for distribution through the club's subsidiary, the Fortune Book Club. Their recommendation was accepted, and the book was scheduled to go out to members simultaneously with Prentice-Hall's November 14, 1974, publication date.

For the moment, it appeared that Zilg had produced a winner. But behind the scenes, powerful forces were mobilizing against the book. When a pre-publication blurb from Prentice-Hall found its way to the Du Pont public relations office in June, six months before the book was to be marketed, Thomas W. Stephenson, an executive in that office, wrote a memo: "Let's arrange to obtain and review a copy ASAP [as soon as possible]." That was June 12, 1974. The very next day, according to the memo of another Du Pont public relations employee, a manuscript had been obtained.

That sounds like one-day delivery. But actually the process by which an unauthorized copy of the manuscript had been spirited out of Prentice-Hall and into the hands of Du Pont had taken several weeks. Could it be that somebody at Prentice-Hall was eager to help Du Pont by highly unorthodox means?

Robert McClarin, the Prentice-Hall salesman who at that time had Delaware as part of his territory, later told Jack Croft of the *Delaware State News* that in May his sales manager had advised him it would be a good idea to pass a copy of Zilg's manuscript to a Wilmington-area bookstore to drum up advance sales. McClarin told Croft that this was the first and only time during his seven years as a salesman for Prentice-Hall that he was instructed to do such a thing. "At the time, I considered it a bit unorthodox," said McClarin. "But what's a poor salesman to do when his boss tells him to do something?"

For his drop-off, McClarin selected the Greenwood Book Shop, one of his biggest clients. It also happened to be a bookstore with close ties to the du Pont family, having once been owned by W. W. Laird, whose mother was Mary du Pont and whose cousin is Gov. Pierre S. du Pont. The family and the corporation were big customers of the bookstore.

Shortly after McClarin dropped off the manuscript, J. Bruce Bredin appeared at the store—just by coincidence, he says—and was asked if he would care to read the manuscript. Bredin, who is Irénée du Pont Jr.'s brother-in-law, said that yes indeed he would like to. After skimming through the manuscript, he judged it to be "unfriendly" and passed it along to Du Pont Company's public relations office.

Execs in that office and in Du Pont's legal office put aside their normal duties to comb through Zilg's manuscript. The report from the legal office, dated June 17, notes that Zilg

> identifies by name and location many family members, and sets forth in detail their corporate holdings and other assets. It is as if he wants to plant the idea that there is an identifia-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ble group in the U.S. who should be "overthrown" because of vast greed and social injustice perpetrated over the past two centuries. The book is aimed more at the family than at the Du Pont Company, probably because social injustice is more appealing when personalized.

Of concern to Du Pont are the many allegations that the family and/or Du Pont control or have controlling interests in many large U.S. corporations such as Uniroyal, Boeing, Coca-Cola [etc.]. A chart at page 766 purports to show that the du Ponts profiteered to the extent of 10.9 billion dollars in defense awards during the Vietnam War period. Republication of this sort of chart or the allegations of common control between Du Pont and scores of major companies could prove annoying.

The legal department did not recommend "any action at this time." But on July 25, Harold G. Brown Jr., an executive in the Du Pont public relations office, telephoned Vilma Bergane, an editor at Book-of-the-Month Club, and told her that several people at Du Pont had read the manuscript and had described it as "scurrilous" and "actionable." She said she would pass the information to her superiors.

BOMC panicked. The next day, its spokesman was on the phone to Peter Grenquist, president of Prentice-Hall's Trade Book Division, to say that on the basis of allegations made by Du Pont, it had decided to "defer" plans to issue Zilg's book. But by the end of July, BOMC decided it would be better not merely to defer but to kill the whole idea. Al Silverman, vice president and editorial director of BOMC, later conceded to a *New York Times* reporter that he could not recall a book being withdrawn under similar circumstances.

Zilg was not informed of any of these developments until October. Nor were there many at Prentice-Hall who seemed very eager to represent his interests at this crucial point. Obviously, Du Pont's pressure and BOMC's retreat would have made great publicity for the book. Any effort to ban or suppress stirs the book-buying public's interest, and the BOMC's dropping of the book would have made good copy. But book publishers think twice about offending the Book-of-the-Month Club. Besides, Zilg was just a rookie, an unknown. Wouldn't it be smarter, from a business standpoint, to sacrifice his book and stay on the good side of BOMC, because in the future there would be books by better-known authors to peddle? Whatever the reason, Prentice-Hall's proposed press run of 15,000 copies was quietly reduced to 10,000 without Zilg being told.

Not everyone at Prentice-Hall was apparently worried about offending BOMC. Bram Cavin, Zilg's editor, wanted to go public with the quarrel. But he was told to keep quiet. In a deposition given later to Zilg's attorneys, Cavin said he felt his employers had "caved in . . . to pressure from Du Pont" by not capitalizing on "this terrific publicity opportunity to take advantage of the fact that this book had been canceled by the book club as the result of pressure by the organization about whom it was written."

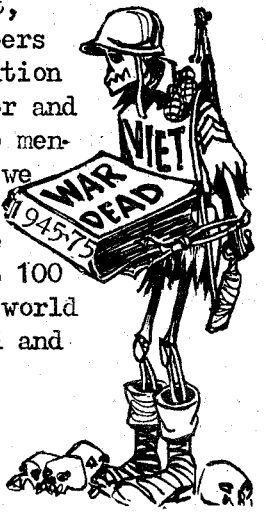
Another Prentice-Hall official who wanted to go public with the suppression story was William Daly, Prentice-

DON'T READ THIS AD...

...if you agree with Commander-in-Chief Ronald Reagan that the Vietnam War was a "noble cause".

...if you agree with National Security Adviser Richard Allen that the US needs a military alliance with South Africa and a naval base there.

...if you agree that while social problems can't be solved by throwing billions of dollars at them, national security problems are solved by throwing 10's of billions at them.



But if you're an intelligent, patriotic citizen who remembers that 30 years of US intervention in Indochina killed our honor and 100,000 of our youth, not to mention a few million of those we were "saving", and if you sense that today's war drive can lead to not 100,000, but 100 million dead Americans in a world of radiated ash, read our ad and take action. Big action.

Veterans for Peace sees the fight against registration and the draft as the front line of battle to stop the military-industrial complex from carrying out any new adventures. So we urge every veteran and non-vet to hurry to National CARD's...

NATIONAL ANTI-DRAFT CONFERENCE

at Wayne State University in Detroit, 13-16 February 1981. Details from Conference HQ, (313)-577-3451 or local anti-draft groups.

Veterans for Peace especially urges vets to come to Detroit, where the Conference's Vets Caucus can organize a powerful new coalition of anti-war vets groups now springing up. It's time to deliver a smashing rebuff to jingoists claiming to speak for us vets!! It will take a lot of money. If you just can't get to Detroit, send a big check to Vets for Peace, PO Box 4598, Chicago, IL 60680.

Veterans for PEACE

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Hall's general counsel, who, immediately after Du Pont began exerting pressure on BOMC, phoned Richard Rea of Du Pont's legal department to tell him that he was "disgusted" with the tactics. Apparently, Prentice-Hall officials told Daly to simmer down.

Getting virtually no support from the Prentice-Hall promotion department, Zilg began pushing the book on his own. He persuaded the *Delaware State News*, the only paper in the state not owned by the du Ponts, to serialize portions of the book, beginning in late October. As a result, *Du Pont* was on the best-seller list in Delaware for several weeks. Even so, Prentice-Hall did not follow up with an advertising campaign (although, given the low advertising budgets traditional in publishing, this by itself would prove nothing).

But meanwhile the reviews were coming in from across the nation, most of them rave, virtually none negative. Marvin Klapper, reviewing it for *Women's Wear Daily*, called it "the most intriguing" among a group of new books that were "educational, interesting, and provocative." Alden Whitman wrote in his *Los Angeles Times* review:

> Probably because the du Ponts have, as a matter of policy, kept their visibility low, we have not had up to now a thorough and readable history of the family, one that relates its enterprises and its wealth to the economic, political and social history of the country. Gerard Colby Zilg's is the first of that kind, and he well merits applause for having written a conscientious and significant book. It's a big book, just under 3 pounds, but every ounce is lean meat, worth savoring. A student of William Appleman Williams, the distinguished historian, Zilg does his master proud by the skeptical, yet subdued, tone of his inquiry into the du Ponts and by his insights into how ordinarily complex corporate history affects the lives and fortunes of people far removed from the seat of the du Pont duchy of Delaware.

And *The New York Times*'s review—which, as it happened, I wrote—described Zilg's book as "something of a miracle."

(Because a review in *The Times* carries extra weight in the book-publishing world, Du Pont officials were especially irritated by my praise of *Du Pont*. Public relations chief Brown ordered one of his underlings, Clinton C. Archer, to dig into my background, apparently to see if there were any useful skeletons.)

The reviews stimulated virtually no follow-up promotion from Prentice-Hall. And it was at this point that, in desperation, the book's editor, Cavin, decided to violate the instructions of his superiors. In his deposition he recalls that he was getting "increasingly distraught," so finally

> I turned to a man, Frank Trippett, several of whose books I have edited and who had had long experience as a newspaperman at *Newsweek* and with *Look* magazine. I said, "Frank"—I described all the events—"is there anything you can do to help me to get this story out?" I had to do this. I had to leak it, as we say, because we were all told not to talk to anybody about this from above.
>
> So I got to Frank, who in turn turned to Herbert Mitgang on *The New York Times*, whom he knew. One thing led to another and the story was assigned to Alden Whitman, who called me at the office, and I said I couldn't talk to him at the office. We arranged to meet. I went to *The New York Times*, and there I told him all the events that I could about what was going on. Whitman had reviewed this book in *The Los Angeles Times*. He was familiar with the book. And I told him other things.

Whitman's story, about fourteen inches in the January 21, 1975, *Times*, was a straightforward account, opening:

> A sober but unflattering book on the Du Pont enterprises and the du Pont family has been withdrawn by the Fortune Book Club after a telephone call from a Du Pont Company executive. An official of the Book-of-the-Month Club, owner of the Fortune Club, denied that the call had influenced its action. And the Du Pont executive said his call did not constitute a threat. However, the book's publisher, Prentice-Hall, said the book club "knuckled under to pressure."

That last statement was not quite accurate. Whitman was giving too much credit to Prentice-Hall as a group. The only person on the top rung of the corporation who seemed to give a damn was general counsel Daly, and it was he, as Whitman makes clear later in the story, who offered the "knuckled under" quote.

Following the appearance of the Whitman article, *The Philadelphia Inquirer*'s Delaware edition reported "soaring" sales in that state. If word of the controversy were spread to other states via advertising, wouldn't sales receive a boost? Maybe. But Prentice-Hall cut the book's ad budget and allowed the book to go out of stock briefly at the end of January 1975, just when demand was peaking. A small reprint finally came off the press on February 18, 1975, but it was not accompanied by an advertising drive. By the end of March, the book was virtually dead. Seven hundred copies were in the warehouse, and that's where they stayed until, much later, Zilg bought them as part of the process by which he regained copyright control over *Du Pont*.

Less than a year after he had leaked the story to *The Times*, editor Cavin was fired by Prentice-Hall for non-productivity. □

Socialism

(Continued From Front Cover)

tacle more ridiculous than the British public in one of its periodic fits of morality. He obviously had not seen successive generations of leftists cursing their former gods and damning what they had worshipped. Let me hasten to add that learning from past mistakes is a virtue, passion against parties or doctrines that led one astray is perfectly natural, and heretics are the salt of the earth. But periodic bouts of recantation are something quite different. Moral indignation turns into moralizing, converts give the impression of changing bandwagons rather than ideas, and people who

---

Daniel Singer is a freelance writer born in Poland and based in Paris. He is the author of the forthcoming The Road to Gdansk *(Monthly Review Press), from which this article was excerpted.*

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

rebelled against a gruesome and treacherous orthodoxy in the name of socialist principles trample those very principles to the applause of their new sponsors.

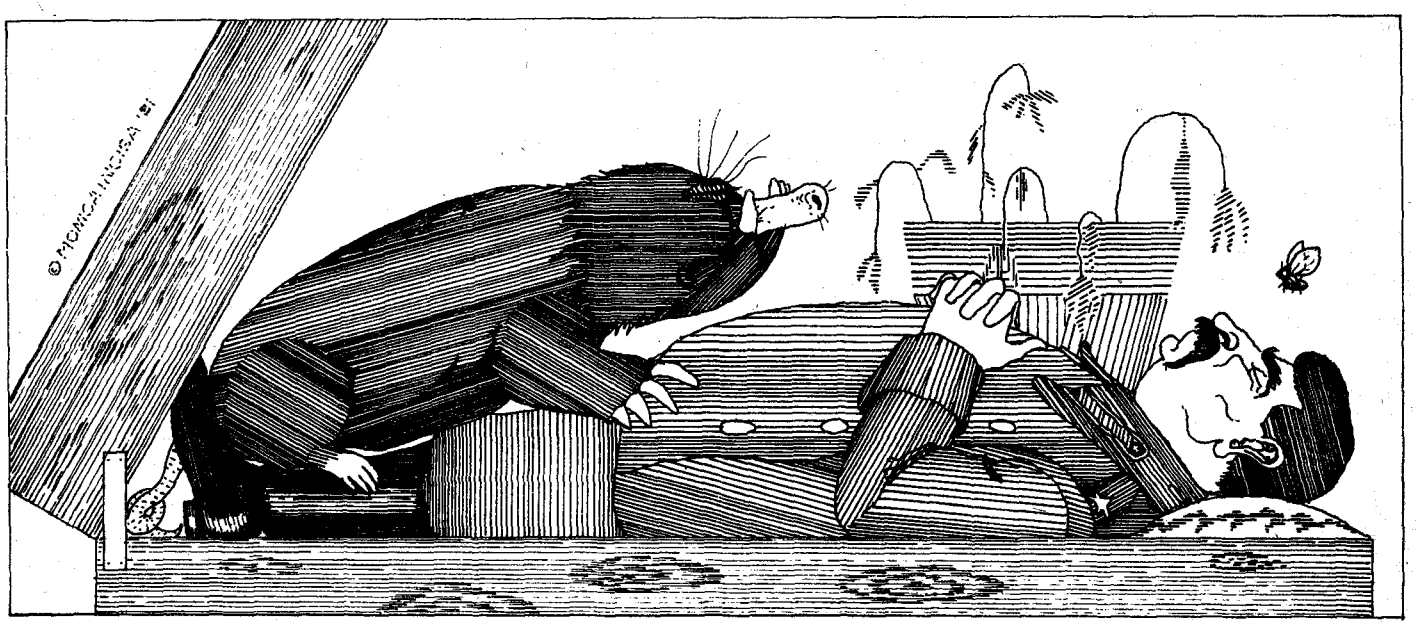
Leaving aside these stage performers making capital out of their conversions, genuine motives for disenchantment have not been missing in the last twenty-five years. The illusions which survived the Soviet invasion of Hungary were shattered when Soviet tanks entered Prague. Hopes raised by China's Cultural Revolution crashed with the fall of the "Gang of Four." The atrocities of Kampuchea's Pol Pot regime, the invasion of Kampuchea by the Vietnamese, and of Vietnam by the Chinese—all this has been too much for a single generation to swallow. And yet it is not enough to explain the current political disarray. After all, previous generations have been submitted to no lesser shocks: the mass purges of the 1930s, the Nazi-Soviet Pact and the postwar repetition throughout Eastern Europe of the Moscow trials should have strained the allegiance of the most faithful. The basic difference is that in the meantime millions have ceased to view the Soviet Union as a socialist model.

The discarding of mythical models and the recognition, however belated, of crimes committed in the name of socialism are indispensable steps on the road to recovery. They should be followed by an open and unflinching debate over the causes of the disease and possible remedies. Despite the publicity surrounding spectacular about-faces, however, it cannot be said that critical analysis has gone very far. The keepers of Soviet orthodoxy and their followers, naturally enough, have refused to see the crisis of their model. Disappointment has come from sections of the new generation of alleged rebels. In retrospect, it is possible to see that in chanting "Marx, Engels, Lenin, Stalin, Mao and Lin Biao," they were as empty and dogmatic as later, when, merely reversing the slogan, they put the blame for the gulag on Marx. These rebels were irrational in both their enthusiasm and their indignation.

By now the reader will have guessed that this essay is far from trendy. Its author, having hailed the French student and worker rising of 1968 as a possible portent of Marx's return to his home ground, that of advanced capitalism, does not change sides because events are moving more slowly than he would have hoped. He feels no need to bury Marx, to apologize for his convictions, or to wear a cross, any cross whatsoever. And, having twelve years ago treated Paris and Prague as part of the same struggle, he still wonders how this struggle can be resumed and linked together, despite the seemingly stiffer odds. But to think of potential action, of ends and means, of real situations, one has to give up introspection or abstract preaching for the unfashionable realm of concrete history.

Stalin is dead. Whether one dates the beginning of his reign in the middle or the late 1920s, the Soviet Union has now lived longer under his successors than under Stalin himself. To explain the tragedy by the wickedness of one man, never tenable, is by now plainly absurd. On the other hand, the system linked with the man's name, shaken and apparently threatened for a decade after his death, has somehow survived. This Brezhnevian restoration raises questions. How solid and permanent is this new stability? What contradictions are hidden behind the apparently stable surface? When will they reach a breaking point and who is likely to exploit them?

To stress the importance of the answers is to labor the obvious. The future of the other nuclear giant, dominating half of Europe and looking beyond, interests everybody. For a socialist, however, the problem has two additional dimensions. One is the reluctance to accept that the changes embodied in the October Revolution ultimately led to a dead end. The second is more practical. To be able to present the Soviet bloc as a mighty monolith, threatening and immutable, should help our ruling classes at home. The capitalist establishments, too, are not as triumphantly safe as they look. Barely out of the '60s, with the unrest of the young generation, they were thrown at once into an economic crisis, still unfinished but having already destroyed the postwar image of modern capitalism as a guarantee for growth. True, the system has confirmed in the process its capacity for survival. Nevertheless, a Soviet bogy helps it to



LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

silence the opposition, as Solzhenitsyn's message—revolution leads to the concentration camp—earlier helped to demoralize the generation of young rebels.

In the West, the return of the classical capitalist crisis compels the establishment to refurbish its obsolete ideological wares of the postwar period. In Eastern Europe a different kind of economic crisis puts no lesser strain on the Soviet establishment. My ambition here is not to find a definition for the Soviet system, to determine whether it is "state capitalist," or a "bureaucratically degenerated workers' state," or whatnot. It is to suggest that if in the first quarter-century after Stalin's death the Soviet economy was sacrificed to preserve the old political order, in the second quarter-century the political structure is likely to burst asunder under economic and social pressure. It is to show that Marx's celebrated mole has kept on digging eastward, too, that contradictions, far from vanishing, have gathered momentum, and that a socialist opposition could seize the resulting opportunities.

In addition to mood and purpose, there exists internal and external pressure for change. Even if one thinks, as I do, that Solzhenitsyn's success is due more to the collapse of the Soviet myth than the other way round, the impact of his writings in the Western world is undeniable. And Solzhenitsyn is not only the moving witness and the false prophet, he is also a pure product of the Soviet regime and an illustration of what happens when the road forward is blocked. Solzhenitsyn's message looks ostentatiously to the past, and his chosen constituency, the peasantry, is shrinking, yet the fact that he nevertheless finds an echo in the country strong enough to frighten the leadership is a measure of the damage wrought by Stalinism and an indication of the ideological desert into which Stalin's heirs are preaching. Indeed, this lesson can be extended well beyond the frontiers of the Soviet Union.

Since whatever its immediate attraction, the "messianism of backwardness" cannot prevail in the Soviet Union for long, the pressure for change has accumulated within Soviet society. Since 1968 there can be no doubt that the Soviet Union itself will be the location of the main battlefield in the Soviet bloc. The countries of Eastern Europe may show the way, hasten the pace, influence the course of Russian events, but Moscow will not allow them to break radically with the established pattern. The decisive conflict will ultimately have to be fought within Soviet frontiers.

Soviet society, it will be argued, is far from frozen. The weight of rural Russia is declining. The rising working class is no longer made up of uprooted peasants thrown into town. Mass education, while transforming the workers, has also produced an army of teachers, technicians and production engineers who do not quite know where they belong. Altogether, the various social groups, while no longer decimated by Stalin's mincing machine, have not yet acquired the cohesion to crystallize and express their interests. So far, the only obvious conflict is within the Communist Party, between the apparatchiks and the technocrats, a conflict bound to intensify as the pace of the Soviet economy slackens. The authorities in their search for higher productivity will be driven to break the existing truce, to attack directly the interests of the workers and thus lead, unwittingly, to the revival of a labor movement.

I will not attempt to specify when this will happen, on how big a scale, or even to assure that such an outcome is inevitable. Though Brezhnevism as a pattern of rule is clearly doomed, the scenarios for the succession are many. If I am correct to place an accent on a growing and evolving labor movement in the widest sense of that term, this is due to a combination of analysis and opinion. It is, in my view, the most likely prospect and it has my preference.

But can the workers play a role in that part of the world? The Polish workers have shown how much can be achieved within a decade. In the winter of 1970-71 the shipwrights of Szczecin and the women of Lodz gained for the Polish workers the right to block unwanted policies. In the summer of 1976, when the Government tried again to boost consumer prices, this veto power was strikingly confirmed. The strikes and concessions they wrung from the Government in the summer of 1980 suggest that the Polish workers may be on the way to conquering the right to strike. In any case, Poland, with its mass of peasant smallholders and its mighty Catholic Church, is not presented as a model: it is shown as an example of how workers could suddenly climb on the political stage all over Eastern Europe.

Finally, there is the question of joint action on the two sides of the Elbe, despite the different political contexts, of which a writer is particularly conscious. To apply Marxist tools to our current predicament, to view the situation in terms of class conflicts, to refer to the social division of labor or the class roots of the withering state is now very unfashionable. To be with-it and sound scientifically up-to-date one must invoke the names of Moses or Mohammed, Krishna or Christ. To swim against such an obscurantist trend, however, does not call for much courage. I run the risk of being dismissed as a dinosaur; such a risk does not compare with the ordeals facing unorthodox thinkers beyond the Elbe.

A Rudolf Bahro is thrown into prison and then expelled from East Germany for expressing his views. Polish dissidents like Jacek Kuron or Adam Michnik, on their way to give a lecture in Poland's "flying university," never know whether they will be arrested or beaten up. The signatories of the Czech Charter in 1977 lie in jail and the wrath of the state spreads to their next of kin. The Soviet dissidents face the choice of the camp, the psychiatric ward, or exile. And we are talking here about prominent, hence relatively protected, people. In the circumstances, the elementary duty of the Western left is to fight for the rights of the East European dissidents, including the freedom to express views we do not share. Here the obligation is simple. The attitude will become more complex once we reach the higher stage of collaboration with the opposition in the Soviet bloc. Then action will be inspired not just by sympathy for the victims but also by a broad agreement with their political objectives.

Is it not farfetched to expect some such collaboration in the not so distant future? This optimistic assumption rests

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

upon two unmistakable trends. First, the economic crisis proves that the current reactionary rule, prevailing in both the East and the West, is not as solidly entrenched as most people think. Second, the narrowed economic gap between the two halves of Europe means that if we were to find socialist solutions in the West, they would answer problems arising beyond the Elbe, too.

Sixty years ago the Western proletariat and its political parties failed to come to the rescue of the victorious and isolated Bolsheviks. The tragic failure does not explain it all, and does not release us from the need to make a critical analysis stretching beyond Stalinism to the behavior, plans and the very conceptions of the Bolsheviks. But the failure and the resulting isolation in a backward country have a great deal to do with the so-called primitive socialist accumulation, of which Stalin's rule was the most ruthless expression. Paradoxically, Stalinism did not have its worst reputation when it was at its cruelest, with concentration camps packed to the full. On the contrary, with its seamy side hidden, it was still a source of inspiration. It is only now that the "odor of corruption" is spreading throughout the world.

The price that we in the advanced capitalist countries have to pay for this is heavy. There is the guilt by association. There are the Communist parties, which have long ceased to be instruments of revolutionary action, but have preserved the system of military command from above disguised under the title of "democratic centralism." There is also the ideological desert after half a century in which "orthodox Marxism" was the name given to the set of "dialectical" quotations made to measure for the Kremlin. But whatever our price may be, it is light when compared with the burden carried on the other side of the Elbe, where it is the people's daily reality. There Marxism is perceived as the cloak concealing injustice, exploitation and the Soviet tanks. My hope is that, as the mole keeps on digging, conditions may soon be ready in the Soviet bloc for the emergence of a socialist opposition. The main obstacle lies in this identification, and it is here that we in the West would help, if we could preach by example.

To talk of potential socialist examples in the industrialized countries of Western and Eastern Europe sounds more utopian today than it did, say, twelve years ago, when Paris and Prague were stirring. Yet we should not be surprised by the apparent relapse. Opportunities for radical change are exceptions, fleeting moments between long intervals, when the conservative inertia

> . . . makes us rather bear those ills we have
> Than to fly to others that we know not of.

The hesitation is even greater when the alleged future is successfully presented as the devil about which we know only too much. Yet it is in those long intervals that contradictions build up and discontent reaches breaking point. The walls are not as solid as they look.

Finally, there is the limit of a metaphor. Socialism, despite the behavior of some of its alleged practitioners, is no religion and Stalin was no Father Zossima. Dead he certainly is, but he is also very far from buried, and it may take generations to get rid of the stench. The reason is obvious. To bury Stalinism really means to revive the idea of socialism and to begin its construction all over again, a prospect as deadly for the aged leaders of "really existing socialism" as it is for the old capitalist masters.

This task is, by its very nature, our common job, East and West. □

LETTERS.

(Continued From Page 162)

sequence of being part of the anti-nuclear movement, as we are at every level. *George Dixon*

Chicago

E. P. Thompson in his article makes reference to the progress the Eastern European nations have made toward becoming democracies. I suggest Thompson journey to Prague, Czechoslovakia, for an interview with its inhabitants. I'm certain the natives can explain "Finlandization" to Thompson.

For a balanced and sane vision of American foreign policy I suggest Robert W. Tucker's article, "The Purposes of American Power," which appeared in the *Foreign Affairs* Winter 1980/81 edition. Of course, it goes without saying that the editors, the readers and the writers of *The Nation* do not want a balanced view.

Charles R. Courtney

Buffalo

A few days ago I went to see the documentary film *The War at Home*, which renewed the focus of some fading memories. That same day *Mother Jones*'s January "no honeymoon" issue arrived, and two days later the Jan. 24 *Nation* was in my mailbox with E. P. Thompson's magnificent and frightening essay on nuclear proliferation. I am writing now to both publications in desperation, impatience and more than a little fear.

It is clear to me—I should think it would be clear to everyone—that the left's decade-long concentration on electoral strategies and personal issues has been a complete failure. Those who disagree will at least acknowledge that we cannot afford to wait until 1982 to act decisively, and that neither then nor in 1984 is there the slightest guarantee that things will go even partly our way electorally.

Everything that has appeared in your pages recently screams with urgency. If, as we are repeatedly told, registration means draft means war; if the powers that be in this country are truly envisaging "limited" nuclear war as a practical course of action; if such a "limited" holocaust must in the event escalate into a full-fledged doomsday scenario; if on top of all that we are to be subjected to a season of witch hunting while the economy falls into a shambles, then there is a real and imminent danger that we will not be here at all in 1982—much less 1984.

This is clearly a time for dramatic and coordinated action, not for talk; yet you seem to be content to do nothing *but* talk about how bad things are and how much worse they'll get.

Those of us (how many, two million?) who marched, committed civil disobedience, were jailed, gassed, clubbed on the head in our efforts to

ETSU LIBRARY
LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

end the Vietnam War a decade ago are still here. We still guard at least the embers of the values so painfully acquired in those days. But there is no national mobilization anymore to call us out into the streets. Of all the figures prominent on the left a decade ago, almost all those who have not opted for apostasy or privatism are on the staffs of magazines—old ones like *The Nation* and new ones like *Mother Jones*. These periodicals have the only nationwide, mass constituency of radicals and left-liberals in the United States today. There is not the slightest doubt that a substantial portion of your readership would respond immediately and enthusiastically to any unambiguous exhortation to action put forward by you, particularly if you spoke in concert. You clearly believe a crisis exists (why otherwise have you been so systematically trying to scare us to death?); so why do you persist in sitting on your thumbs?

It's all very well to say "organize your own people locally," but ten years of such local activity have gotten us almost nowhere. We are fragmented, atomized. You and your sister publications on the left are the only things that can bring us together when, as now, we have to be together. Nor can you take the stand that, as organs of information, it is not your job to exhort. That job is yours by default since no one else can do it. You have not only the power to produce mass action on the left, you have the moral obligation to make the attempt.

FOR THE LOVE OF HUMANITY, TELL US WHAT WE SHOULD DO! I fear, I fear terribly, that if you continue to let resolution be "sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought," that this drama, like *Hamlet*, will end with the stage strewn with corpses.

Andrew Stiller

Tucson, Ariz.

E. P. Thompson hits the nail with chilling accuracy, unfortunately. I feel quite doomed; if doomed, there is no point in *not* protesting the so-aptly termed Satanic Kingdom, since ignoring the problem with a be-merry attitude will not insulate any of us from the fallout of the cold war which will reach us before the first missile takes off.

The author alludes to phenomena of recent history here in the United States, particularly to the alliance of the political right with the religious right, exemplified and epitomized by the Moral Majority and Christian Voice, in his statements of the fantasy quality of much popular thought and the lure of the Gandalf-type of figure to those with a Manichaean view, that good/evil dichotomy so prevalent in American culture.

And it is all so dangerous. What few commentators recognize is the fact that reactionary Christians look forward to Armageddon; their sermons are full of "biblically based" prophecies that Russia and America are predestined to be the agents of the last great battle between Christ and the Devil, a battle that will usher in the kingdom of God; and they delude themselves that they, as Christians, will survive to walk the streets of gold while the rest of us will pay for our evil by death.

Such a state of mind is not amenable to rational persuasion, for it presupposes a world in which Gandalfs are more real than unemployed blacks. The unsettled atmosphere created by an economy listing under the misplaced weight of militarist industries has given this moral right its opportunity to strangle the Constitution as well as to incite final war. We have an example here in Arizona, which just became the twentieth state to call for a national convention to amend the Constitution to prohibit abortion. One of the legislators responsible for this travesty of democracy has gone on public record, via a radio interview, as opposing abortion in all circumstances *except* when a black man rapes a white woman. He concluded his comments by denying he is a bigot.

The connections are all too clear. As Thompson has made so plain, the atmosphere of war preparations threatens not only the peace but freedom itself; it threatens, on an immediate day-to-day basis, my freedom to be gay, to be atheist, to live without fear, not only of war but of my neighbor, and to read and think as I choose. It enthrones the banal purveyors of death and ugliness and destroys everything beautiful in our souls as a prelude to destroying our lives. And these purveyors wish it so. Like Thompson, I fear the probabilities are against us, but we have nothing to lose by protesting.

William L. Scurrah

Sonoma, Calif.

I read E. P. Thompson's "Letter to America" in one sitting. During a short break from the dismal facts, I slipped into reverie, thoughts drifting to simpler times.

Imagine a frontier town, the dusty main street suddenly deserted and silent except for two gunfighters—tough, macho, dead-earnest (gunfighters never smile or laugh)—walking toward each other in stiff-legged pomposity, so evenly matched and so spiteful that not one but both will surely die. Bang, bang. The folks huddled behind shuttered windows could celebrate—if it weren't for the fact that Matt U.S.A. and Ivan U.S.S.R. used radioactive bullets. Soon the whole town will be dead, a ghost town in perpetuity.

The really pitiful thing about the gunfighters is that both could clearly see the outcome, but neither had the genuine courage to break form and offer the olive branch—it would have been too sissy. (Hell, they might even have been accused of being gay.) They would rather die instead, defending their honor. They were locked into their behavior.

But we are not. Imagine if Kitty, the owner of the Longbranch Saloon (who, up to now, has let the boys have their fun), strode out calmly into the street and stood between the silly fluffy-headed fellows, and announced that their little game was over and that their rehabilitation called for sensitivity training and working with foster children. (It could just as easily have been broken up by Doggy, another saloon owner.)

As Gandhi said, "Bullies will be found wherever there are cowards."

Rennie Payne-Ayers

AUTHOR'S QUERY

For a biography of Edgar Snow, I would appreciate hearing from anyone with correspondence, recollections, or other pertinent information describing Mr. Snow's life or his contributions to American thought and perceptions of China.

John Maxwell Hamilton
120 Hamilton Ave.
Silver Spring, Md. 20901

MORE TO COME

We have received a number of letters on E. P. Thompson's article and will publish further comments as space allows.

—The Editors

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

BOOKS & THE ARTS.

A Limited Social Contract

CHARLES BEITZ

BEYOND ADVERSARY DEMOCRACY. *By Jane J. Mansbridge. Basic Books. 398 pp. $20.*

The New Left never had a very coherent political theory. It was guided by a distinctive vision of participatory democracy, but the details of the vision were usually left invitingly obscure and the likely consequences of greater participation in a highly stratified society were seldom anticipated. In retrospect, the vision appears so naïve as to have been almost charming.

Jane Mansbridge's interesting book provides a sympathetic but critical examination of the ideal of "unitary democracy" (others would call it "direct" or "Rousseauian") that lay at the heart of the New Left's vision. Unitary democracy is distinguished from the "adversary democracy" of orthodox liberalism primarily by an ideology that distrusts representative institutions and prizes participation by all citizens in a community's political deliberations, and by a decision rule that normally requires consensus. Its inspiration, as Mansbridge notes, is closer to Aristotle's conception of the polis as an association for the expression of civic friendship than to the more modern conception of the state as an instrument for serving private ends. Mansbridge's findings teach valuable—if sometimes unacknowledged—lessons about the limits of the participatory vision.

Beyond Adversary Democracy contains two parts with only a tenuous connection. The longer of the two is a set of case studies of two participatory polities: a town meeting in Selby, a Vermont town, and a counseling and crisis intervention center called Helpline. The other part is a connected series of philosophical essays on topics in democratic theory. Ostensibly, these essays bring to bear findings from the case studies on "a number of fundamental contradictions" in "both popular and academic thinking about democracy," but, in fact, very few of Mansbridge's largely sensible remarks in these essays depend on her empirical findings.

The case studies are by far the more interesting part of this book. Drawing on close observation and in-depth interviews, Mansbridge gives a subtle and perceptive account of the reactions of the citizens of these communities to the experience of political participation. She is at her best in probing the effects of participation on the self-images of her subjects—a question of conspicuous importance for the tradition of democratic theory associated with Rousseau and John Stuart Mill, which emphasizes the contribution of active citizenship to self-respect and self-development.

It turns out that the effects are much more ambiguous than either Rousseau or Mill contemplated. In both Selby and Helpline, active participation enhanced the self-respect of those with personal qualities that make for success in committees and meetings—the articulate, the argumentative, the well-informed and the poised. But among others, life in a participatory polity was profoundly alienating. Being brought face to face with the smart and the articulate, the ignorant and the quiet experienced a palpable loss of self-respect as they were reminded of their felt inadequacies. In response to a question about why she didn't participate more in town meetings, a Selby resident replied: "ME? They'd say 'Aaaagh! She ain't nothing!' " Mansbridge comments: "I was sure, from the way she said it, that at least in the political arena this was also her judgment on herself."

Oddly, in view of her admiration for the unitary ideal, Mansbridge is not much distressed about this aspect of participatory democracy; her attitude seems to be that, within limits, it can't be helped. She is more concerned about the consequences of inequalities in political skills when a participatory polity must resolve conflicting interests.

The unequal distribution of political skills consistently translates into an unequal distribution of interest satisfaction, and it seems manifestly unfair for a community to allocate its resources according to such an arbitrary standard—particularly since degree of political skill and class position correlated so clearly in both Selby and Helpline.

This is not the worst. The ideology of unitary democracy both magnifies and legitimizes the effects of inequalities of political skill. In Selby, for example, the mechanism of face-to-face democracy created powerful incentives to submerge conflict and to export controversial decisions from the public forum to an informal elite of the town's influentials. Partisan decisions arrived at in this informal way were subsequently endorsed (often unanimously) by the town meeting; they appeared as the common interest and were accepted as such even by those whose own interests were obviously different. Dissent was never overtly suppressed and was occasionally voiced, and there were a few instances of effective opposition to established interests. But it is clear that unitary democracy, which we are accustomed to think of as highly egalitarian, is compatible with (and in some instances may even exacerbate) striking inequalities in power.

If there is an overarching thesis in this book, it is that unitary democracy is appropriate only to polities where there are many common and few conflicting interests. Mansbridge's view is that inequalities of power can never be entirely eliminated from unitary democracy; they will be unobjectionable only if they do not lead to significant inequalities in interest satisfaction. Therefore, inequalities in interest satisfaction will be avoided only to the extent that the powerful and the weak have broadly similar interests.

Such coincidences of interests are extraordinarily unusual. Helpline, which probably comes as close to the unitary ideal as anything, is illustrative. It was a

Charles Beitz teaches political theory at Swarthmore College and is the author of Political Theory and International Relations *(Princeton University Press).*

DEADLINE REMINDER: All submissions for the poetry contest sponsored jointly by *The Nation* and the 92nd Street YM-YWHA must be in no later than February 24, 1981.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

voluntary rather than a territorial polity, and therefore could be selective about its membership. Its members were, in fact, similar in age, class and race (of the forty-one staff members of Helpline, only three were from working-class backgrounds and three were black). There was a common commitment to an ethic of social responsibility and communal solidarity. Helpline's work engendered a high level of emotional stress for the staff and a corresponding need for mutual support. There were no deep divisions of religion or political ideology. Even within the organization, there were few reasons for interests to conflict. Staff members received equal pay, and Mansbridge reports only one instance in which Helpline's shrinking resources forced a decision about priorities that required at least some members to accept individual losses.

Like the society that Rousseau envisions in *The Social Contract*, unitary democracy turns out to be an ideal with extremely limited application—few small groups, and probably no large states, meet the common interest condition. Where the condition is not met, unitary democracy will not achieve the ends that democracy is supposed to promote—self-respect, self-development and equal satisfaction of interests. This, of course, is the perception that animates the adversary tradition, and it is doubtful that anyone other than a New Left romantic (if there still are any) would be surprised by it. Still, it is good to have this conclusion so perceptively documented, especially in a way that recognizes the virtues of unitary democracy when it works.

Mansbridge's study teaches a further lesson. Unitary democracy is not only an inappropriate ideal for most modern polities; it fundamentally misunderstands the requirements of democratic equality. Serious democrats must address themselves to the structural features of economic and political life that give rise to enduring inequalities of power as well as those that reinforce the sense of political impotence, and when these are either impossible or too costly to change, democrats must seek mechanisms to compensate for their effects. To concentrate instead on increasing opportunities for participation, or on eliminating such mediating devices as parties and representative institutions, is to succumb to the romance of the polis. □

Early Pompeian (for Norline)

Ere Babylon was dust
The magus, Zoroaster, my dead child,
met his own image, walking in the garden,
that apparition, sole of men, he saw . . .
—Shelley

I

In the first years, when your hair
was parted severely in the Pompeian style,
you resembled those mosaics
in which the round eyes' black-oiled stare
were earthen cruses where two wicks
kept their immortal pinpoints, or were,
in laughing days, black olives on a saucer.

Then, one night, years later,
a flaring torch passed slowly down that wall
and lit them, and it was your turn.
Your girlhood was finished, your sorrows were robing all
your childish sorrows into the readiness of woman.

The darkness placed a black shawl around your shoulders,
pointed to a colonnade of torches
like palm-trees with their fronds on fire,
pointed out the cold flagstones to the sacrificial basin
where the priest stands with his birth-sword.
You nodded. You began to walk.

Voices stretched out their hands and you stepped from the wall.

Past the lowering eyes of rumours,
past the unblinking stares of the envious,
as step by step, it faded
behind you, that portrait
with its plum-parted lips,
the skin of pomegranate
the forehead's blank, unborn bewilderment.
Now you walked in those heel-hollowed steps
in which all of our mothers before us went.

And they led you, pale as the day-delivered moon
through the fallen white columns of a hospital
to the volcanic bedrock of mud and screams and fire,

into the lava of the damned birth-blood,
the sacrificial gutters
to where the eye of the stillborn star showed at the end of your road,
a dying star fighting the viruses
of furious constellations,
through the tangled veins, the vineyard of woman's labour,
to a black ditch under the corpuscles of stars,
where the shrunken grape would be born that would not call you mother.

In your noble, flickering gaze there was that which repeated
to the stone you carried
"The hardest times are the noblest, my dead child,"
and the torch passed its flame to your tongue,
your face bronzed in the drenches and fires of your finest sweat.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Derek Walcott, a resident of Trinidad and New York City, is the author of Sea Grapes *and* The Star-Apple Kingdom. *This poem is from a new collection of his work,* The Fortunate Traveller, *to be published this summer by Farrar, Straus & Giroux.*

In their black sockets the pebbles of your eyes
rattled like dice in the tin cup of the blind Fates.
On the black wings of your screams I watched vultures rise,
the laser-lances of pain splinter on the gods' breast-plates.
Your nerve-ends screamed like fifes,
your temples repeated a drum,
and your firelit head, in profile, passed other faces
as a funeral-ship passes the torch-lit headlands
with its princely freight,
your black hair billowing like dishevelled smoke.

Your eyelids whitened like knuckles gripping
the incomprehensible, vague sills of pain.
The door creaked, groaning open, and in its draught, no,
a whirlwind
the lamp that was struggling with darkness was blown out
by the foul breeze off the amniotic sea.

II

By the black harbour
the black schooners are tired
of going anywhere, the sea
is black and salt as the mind of a woman after labour.

Child, wherever you are,
I am still your father,
let your small, dead star
rock in my heart's black salt
into this sacrificial basin where I weep,
you passed from a sleep to a sleep
with no pilot, without a light.

Beautiful, black, and salt-warm is the starry night,
the smell off the sea is your mother,
as is this wind that moves in the leaves of the wharf
under the pavement light.

I stare into black water by whose hulls
heaven is rocked like a cradle,
except, except for one extinguished star,
and I think of a hand that stretches out from her bedside
for nothing,
and then is withdrawn, remembering where you are.

III

I will let the nights pass,
I shall allow the sun to rise,
I shall let it pass like a torch along a wall
on which, there is fadingly set,
stone by fading stone,
the face of an astonished girl, her lips, her black hair parted
in the early Pompeian style.

And what can I write for her,
but that when we are stoned with pain,
and we shake our heads wildly from side to side,
saying "no more," "no more again," to certain things,
no more faith, no more hope, only charity,
charity gives faith and hope much stronger wings.

IV

As for you, little star,
my lost daughter, you are
bent in the shape forever
of a curled seed sailing the earth,
in the shape of one question, a comma
that knows before us whether death
is another birth.
I had no answer
to that tap-tapping under the dome
of the stomach's round coffin.
I could not guess whether you were calling
to be let in, or to be let go
when the door's groaning blaze
that might have seared the grape-skin
frailty of your eyes to cry out
against our light, until all was kin
to the light, and why your eyes, for this,
remain stubbornly closed,
as you sailed without a shore
your seven months on the amniotic sea.
You never saw your murderer,
your birth and death giver,
but I will see you everywhere
I will see you in a boneless
sunbeam that strokes the texture
of things, my arm, the pulse-less arm
of an armchair, an iron railing, the leaves
of a dusty plant by a closed door,
in the beams of my own eyes in a mirror.
The lives that we must go on with
are also yours. So, I go on
down the apartment steps to the hot
streets of July the twenty-second, nineteen
hundred and eighty in Trinidad,
amazed that trees are still green
around the Savannah, over the Queen's
Park benches, amazed that our feet can carry
the stone of the earth, the heavier stone of the head,
and I pass through shade where a curled
blossom falls from a black forked branch
to the asphalt, soundlessly. No cry.
You knew neither this world or the next,
and, as for us, whose hearts must never harden
against ourselves, who sit on a park bench
like any calm man in a public garden
watching the bright traffic,
we can only wonder why the seed should envy
our suffering, to flower, to suffer,
to die. Gloria, Perdita, I christen
you in the shade, on the bench
with no hope of the resurrection.
Pardon. Pardon the pride I have taken
in human agony.

Derek Walcott

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Journey for Tony

RICHARD LINGEMAN

AMERICA, LOST AND FOUND. *By Anthony Bailey. Random House. 160 pp. $9.95.*

Over the past decade we have been seeing a small but noteworthy flow of novels, memoirs and stories about refugee childhoods during World War II. The children of that war have grown up and are now telling us of their memories and nightmares, of partings and loss, of adaptation to strange new homes—and sometimes even more difficult reunions when, as strangers, they go home again.

In *America, Lost and Found*, Anthony Bailey, who writes for *The New Yorker*, has set down his own memories of the four years he lived with an American family in Dayton, Ohio. Bailey left England in the fall of 1940 as the German blitz intensified. More than 750,000 British children were evacuated from the cities at that time, though most were sent to supposedly safe homes in the English countryside. (Bailey's parents, and an infant sister, had already moved to a country cottage between Southampton and Portsmouth, two port cities that were hard hit by bombs. But in 1944, Mrs. Bailey narrowly missed death when a German plane dived, spraying bullets all around her, before attacking a group of Canadian tanks parked in the village in readiness for the Normandy invasion.)

There was a surge of sympathy in America for the English children, prompted by newsreel shots of waifs with gas masks slung on their shoulders boarding trains; a book about an English refugee child, *Journey for Margaret*, became a 1942 movie, making Margaret O'Brien a child star and bringing tears to people's eyes in theaters across the nation. The British Government sought to send children abroad, but abandoned the program after two ships carrying children were sunk by German U-boats; moreover, ships were needed for more important cargoes. Bailey, however, made his journey under the auspices of a private American group called the American Committee for the Evacuation of Children. In August 1940, he received orders, like a soldier going overseas, to appear at the Grosvenor Hotel in London. After an unexplained postponement, the 7-year-old boy was put on board the *Antonia*, the last ship carrying evacuated children to leave England.

The children were limited to those from "professional and clerical" families (no cockney kids from the London streets for these American sponsors). Once in America they were sent to "compatible" homes. Bailey landed in the palatial residence of a wealthy, art-loving machine-tools manufacturer named Otto Spaeth, whose ménage included his wife, Eloise, four children (three daughters and a boy, also named Tony, who was one year younger than Bailey), a butler-chauffeur, a governess and several maids.

What Bailey fell into was a typical American wartime childhood, though at a somewhat atypical economic level. There were the endless after-school games of "war" and counterespionage, centering around a large concrete incinerator that made an excellent mock pillbox. There were apparently no strains, no cross-cultural clashes more serious than Bailey's ejection from a spelling bee after he spelled "bin" b-i-n, only to learn the word was "been," pronounced "bean" in England.

Writing in a beautifully understated, humorous way, Bailey holds us with a story that is largely devoted to the quiddities of normal American middle-class growing up, with a slight English twist. As he notes in an aside on old photographs, he is looking back with a kind of rueful, affectionate surprise at the boy he was. And like a snapshot, he evokes the radiance of surfaces but only suggests deeper resonances. Once, he faints in church, overcome by the oppressiveness of the place; it may have been a precocious crisis of faith—or maybe, he says, the result of not having had his Wheaties that morning. It's impossible to recall all the thoughts of one's childhood, of course, but one wonders if he, like "a few" other British children he mentions and presumably talked to much later, "felt always that they had gained an unfair advantage by avoiding the toughest parts of the war." Some of these children, he tells us, especially the girls, had difficulty readjusting to England, and many returned to live in Canada and the States in later years.

Bailey's lingering aftertaste of his experience was a sense of having had a dual childhood—of growing up neither clearly English nor clearly American. "I think, now and then," he writes, "that although in some respects having two countries in one's life hastens the growing-up process, in other respects it means that one takes twice as long to mature, to learn how to cope with and integrate one's double childhood." After the war, Bailey returned to "rediscover" his "lost" America, living here fifteen years before going back.

"Hands across the sea," was the wartime cliché, and in Bailey's case, it applies. There were hands on both sides of the Atlantic—those that, with what wrench he can only imagine, let him go to save him, and those in America that embraced him. There is no deeper moral here than that implicit one. But Bailey's story reminds us that with luck and people doing the best they can, children who are loved can survive nearly the worst that the adult world has in store for them. □

Richard Lingeman, executive editor of The Nation, *is author of* Small Town America *and* Don't You Know There's a War On? *(both Putnam), a history of the home front during World War II.*

'Serious' Politics in Italy

STAUGHTON LYND

THE PROMISE OF EUROCOMMUNISM. *By Carl Marzani. Lawrence Hill & Company. 346 pp. Paper $8.95.*

Notwithstanding its title, this book is actually a detailed account of Eurocommunism in one country, Italy. Carl Marzani has remarkable credentials for his task. His father came to the United States as a refugee from Mussolini's Italy in the 1920s. Marzani grew up in the coal mining region, where his father worked as a tailor, and proceeded to higher education at Williams College, Oxford University and the battlefields of the Spanish Civil War. He was briefly a member of the American Communist Party and worked for the Office of Strategic Services during World War II. After the war, he was imprisoned for allegedly concealing his party membership while in government service. Mar-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

zani is the author of *We Can Be Friends*, one of the earliest revisionist accounts of the origins of the cold war, and edited the first English translation of the writings of Antonio Gramsci.

In writing *The Promise of Eurocommunism*, Marzani traveled in Italy and Sicily interviewing countless protagonists. As a former political prisoner and translator of Gramsci, he had access to a meeting of the Communist Party caucus at the Fiat plant in Turin. Yet he was also received by high-ranking Catholics. The result is that these interviews, reported in italic typeface interspersed with more analytical segments, themselves exemplify the dialogue between Communism and the Catholic Church, which Marzani feels is at the heart of Italian Eurocommunism. The study thus combines an informality one associates with oral history, or investigative reporting, with a rigorous use of documents. The result is more three-dimensional and satisfying than the usual work of history.

To grasp the "promise" which Marzani finds in Italian Eurocommunism, it is necessary to view it both in the context of Soviet bloc politics since World War II (a picture painted by Marzani in his first three chapters) and in the context of a century-long effort to find a strategy for the transition to socialism in advanced capitalist economies.

The left in the industrialized West lacks a coherent strategy of social change. In contrast, since the end of World War II, nation after nation in the Third World has found a path to some variety of socialism. Socialism has failed to materialize in the very economically advanced capitalist societies where Marx predicted it. Radicals in these societies, their rhetoric notwithstanding, are in fact bewildered as to how to move forward.

A way to describe the problem is that there seems no obvious way to create a centrally planned, publicly owned economy piecemeal. The European middle class created capitalist society in bite-sized chunks: city by city, congregation by congregation, firm by firm. Only after a network of new local capitalist institutions had been created was the "rising bourgeoisie" required to confront the state power of Charles I, or Louis XIV, or, in this country, the slave South. Similarly, Third World revolutionaries, in seizing liberated zones by guerrilla warfare, have perforce created new local institutions for all the needs of life at the same time that they pursued the objective of national state power. Revolutionaries in the West work in more centralized societies, with the result that the institutions they create, such as industrial trade unions, tend to become part of the existing scheme of things, rather than exemplars of a new social order.

Three times in the past century there have been movements which seemed to offer a way out of this impasse.

The Social Democratic parties at the turn of the century came first. To the aging Engels, the German Social Democratic Party in particular, with its passage from illegality to legality and then its increasing vote from election to election, with its affiliated trade unions, its youth organizations and its party press and schools, seemed indeed the new society within the womb of the old. This model destroyed itself when, with a handful of honorable exceptions, the Social Democratic parties supported their respective national governments in World War I.

The Popular Front movements in the period after 1935 represented a second historical opening. Carl Marzani was a Popular Front organizer as a member of the Communist Party on the Lower East Side of New York City. He describes the experience as "Eric Lanzetti" in Vivian Gornick's *Romance of American Communism*. The Lower East Side then seemed to Marzani "a sovereign state, working-class and radical to the core." There were practically no conservatives. Three thousand of the 250,000 people in Marzani's section were Communists. People turned first to them for help. The party was powerful enough, according to Marzani, to veto the Democratic Party's candidates for any local office in the area. Significantly, Marzani also comments in his autobiographical novel, *The Survivor*, that the American Communist Party's work on the Lower East Side at that time created "the nearest American equivalent of the European mass party."

In the United States, Popular Front politics ended more with a whimper than a bang, as during World War II the American Communist Party dis-

Staughton Lynd is the author of Labor Law for the Rank and Filer *(Singlejack Books) and is at work on a book about the steel mill shutdowns in Youngstown, Ohio.*

OHIO UNIVERSITY PRESS
Scott Quad, Dept. CKB
Athens, OH 45701

GUERRILLAS AND TERRORISTS
Richard Clutterbuck
"The book is a must for the politicians, army and police officers, students of current affairs and above all for every intelligent citizen who may himself be a victim of such movements one day."—*Current Events*
125 pp. $12.00 cloth $5.95 paper

BUSINESS AND GOVERNMENT DURING THE EISENHOWER ADMINISTRATION: A Study of the Antitrust Policy of the Antitrust Division of the Justice Department
Theodore Philip Kovaleff
This detailed study breaks new ground in a previously untapped area. Kovaleff's use of the Department of Justice files as well as his interviews and correspondence with leading members of the Antitrust Division provides new and valuable insight into both the way in which the Division formulates and executes antitrust enforcement policies and the newly developing field of revisionism on the Eisenhower administration.
313 pp. $17.95

JOHN RAWLS' THEORY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE: An Introduction
H. Gene Blocker & Elizabeth H. Smith, Editors
Rawls' *A Theory of Justice* (1971) will have a major impact on social theory and public policy issues. His work is couched in the technical language of contemporary analytic philosophy, and this volume of sixteen original essays attempts to meet an urgent need to render the fundamentals of Rawls' theory accessible to all who are concerned with distributive justice and individual liberty.
xxiii, 520 pp. $22.95

Please add $1.25 postage and handling for first book, 25¢ for each additional book.

ETSU LIBRARY
LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

solved itself as a party, expelled members of Japanese ancestry and fervently supported the wartime no-strike pledge.

In Europe, on the other hand, Popular Front politics flowed naturally into the heroic deeds of the wartime Resistance. And the Resistance, in turn, laid the basis for the third major effort to find a strategy for the transition to socialism in the West: Eurocommunism.

It was the Resistance, to begin with, that established Italian Communists in the eyes of their countrymen as "serious" people. This is an indispensable, threshold attribute. As Marzani explains, "serious" in Italian carries the connotations "responsible" or "reliable." He says that "Whatever their differences, everyone in Italy, left or right, agrees that Communists are serious people." He cites, in support of this generalization, Peter Nichols of *The Times* of London, and Diane Johnstone of *In These Times*, who writes that the Italian Communist Party "more than any other social unit, defends in Italy . . . the democratic nature of the state." This association of Communism and democracy, difficult for an American to imagine, grew directly from the Communist Party's leading role in the anti-Fascist Resistance.

Indeed, as Marzani tells the story, Italian Eurocommunism was an instance of what Trotsky called "combined development," incorporating in each succeeding stage of its development elements from preceding struggles. The Italian Socialist Party was one of the few to oppose World War I. Pietro Nenni, the Socialist who advocated cooperation with Communists, and Palmiro Togliatti, the Communist who urged solidarity with both Socialists and Catholics, met and came to trust each other during the Spanish Civil War. And at the culmination of the Resistance, Togliatti, rather than seeking to seize power (an effort Marzani thinks would have been futile), concentrated on the creation of a democratic Constitution, which removed constitutional obstacles to the taking of private property and to divorce, and which mandated the decentralization of the country into regions.

Within this framework, the Communist Party vote increased from 19 percent in 1946 to 34.5 percent in 1976. Communists administer something like half of the nation's municipal and regional governments, including the government of Bologna, which is a model for all Europe. Two events of the 1970s deepened and enriched the process. The first was the referendum on divorce in 1974. A law making divorce possible had gone through Parliament in an all-night session by a vote of 319 to 286. Catholic groups placed a proposal to repeal the law on the ballot. To the astonishment of almost everyone, in a referendum in which close to 90 percent of those eligible voted, nearly 60 percent voted not to repeal the law. The second was the passage of Law 382 in 1975, finally implementing the decentralization of health, education and welfare required by the postwar Constitution.

In Marzani's view, the principal objective of Italian Eurocommunism is gradually to take private investment decisions under public control. The unions, the Communists and the Socialists believe that workers' ownership of firms in a capitalist economy is an illusion, he says. They strive, instead, to create an institutional environment in which business will be prohibited from investing in high-rise apartment houses on the Emerald Coast of Sardinia at a profit of 20 percent, and instead invest in shoe factories in Sicily at a profit of 6 percent.

Whether this strategy is also an illusion remains to be seen. One critique of Eurocommunism holds that it is warmed-over Social Democracy, and will be no more successful than its predecessor in creeping up on control of the capitalist system. Another criticism points to decentralization as an open door to flight from union recognition, which actually results in sweatshop conditions.

Of one thing we can be sure. In Ronald Reagan's America, just as in postwar Italy, radicalism will be looked to for leadership only to the extent that it defends family, neighborhood and nation. The ideology of the right is contradictory: the free enterprise it champions destroys the traditional values it also claims to uphold. In this circumstance, the left, if it keeps its head, has a unique opportunity to convince the American people of its "seriousness." Carl Marzani's loving account of Italy's political odyssey gives us clues for our own journey. □

Public Meeting

POLAND AND THE USSR

Speaker: Daniel Singer
author of
The Road to Gdansk
(Monthly Review Press 1981)

Place: John Jay College
445 W. 59th Street
Time: 7:30 p.m.
Admission: $3.00

Date: March 6, 1981

SPONSORED JOINTLY BY MONTHLY REVIEW/MARHO

THEATER.

STEPHEN HARVEY

A Midsummer Night's Dream
The Recruiting Officer

If you're planning to start a classical repertory troupe in this country, it's always nice to have some talent and a flair for organization, and a firm friend on deck at the National Endowment for the Arts is no small asset either. However, the one indispensable attribute must be a streak of pure utopian chutzpah—preferably coupled with a willful disregard for the history of the American theater over the last half-century. Countless ventures may have collapsed ignominiously in the past, but this time, damn it, things are going to be *different* (or so the troupe's amanuensis had better convince himself). Yet even by the quixotic standards of the breed, Brooklyn Academy of Music chief Harvey Lichtenstein and his theater company's artistic director, David Jones, apparently possess faith so blind that it borders on hubris. First they commit themselves to a pro-

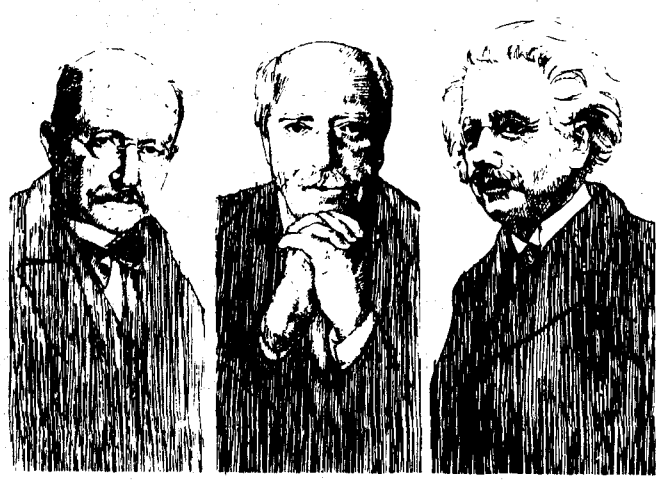
LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

gram of serious repertory, housed in a Brooklyn theater just close enough to the drama hub to prompt unwanted comparisons, yet sufficiently remote to thwart attendance by much of their potential public. Next they muster something less than anyone's A-list of local stage actors, and expect them to shine in a succession of plays which might easily daunt a company with decades of ensemble training behind it.

BAM's inaugural season last year was sustained in part by the patience and good will of subscribers and critics impressed by the optimism surrounding this enterprise, and intrigued by the esoterica of most of the repertory, which ranged from lesser Gorky to the nether regions of Rachel Crothers and Charles MacArthur. This year's selections, albeit somewhat more orthodox, are at least as challenging. While it may be a mite premature to ask for theatrical revelations on Lafayette Avenue, the time has come for BAM to fulfill a few reasonable expectations of middleweight competence. With the heavy artillery of Ibsen, Brecht and Sophocles still in store for the spring, the BAM Theater Company's current offerings don't exactly inspire high confidence for the future. As currently displayed in alternating bills of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and Farquhar's *The Recruiting Officer*, the company impresses as transplanted summer stock with delusions far beyond its station.

It took some daring on BAM's part to start this season with Shakespeare's Athenian revel, considering that the memory of the Peter Brook version has remained so vivid to many who saw it performed in the very same complex some years ago. Jones doesn't try to compete with the high-wire acrobatics choreographed by ringmaster Brook. The trouble is that the lucid, conventional approach this director seems to be aiming for is utterly beyond the grasp of the earthbound tyros who make up much of his company. Were this another of those time-warp renderings of Shakespeare, transposed, say, to Big Sur in the 1960s or the Côte d'Azur circa 1926, some logical purpose might be gleaned from the babel of accents and discordant castings against type. Yet the setting of this *Dream* remains vaguely stripped-down Elizabethan, while the identities of its denizens become more blurred than in the Bard's most flamboyant hallucinations. The Oberon and Titania of Brian Murray and Sheila Allen orate with clipped Anglo-Saxon aplomb, yet their fairy courtiers bleat and mumble as if their nocturnal glade were simply the Mudd Club on a dull night; Titania and Ted Sod's Puck do, however, share the dubious distinction of imparting the same predictable cadences to their line readings.

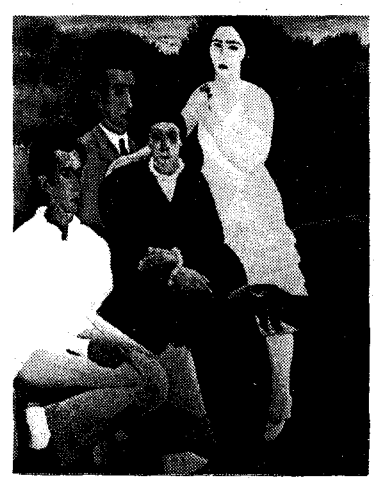
Granted, the Athenian court should by rights be a rather prosaic place, compared with Oberon's airy domain, but that's no reason to cast a Theseus (James Harper) of such flat Rotarian bluntness, incongruously mated to Cheryl Yvonne Jones's huskily stilted Hippolyta. Their subjects, the quartet of mortal lovers, have every reason to be confused in their affections, since their respective interpreters tend to fumble in a limbo of cross-purposes; Joe Morton declaims Lysander's speeches with a withering intensity implying that, on the whole, he'd rather be in *Richard II*, while Beth McDonald imbues Hermia with a comely starlet vacuity akin to Karen Black's. On the lowest social stratum, the high jinks of Bottom and friends are likewise laborious going, save the straight-faced gawkiness of Frank Maraden's Flute. The most amusing aspect of their purposefully gauche struggle with the "Pyramus and Thisbe" interlude is the way it unintentionally mirrors most of their confreres' ham-handed treatment



Reality and Scientific Truth

Discussions with Einstein, von Laue, and Planck

By Ilse Rosenthal-Schneider. Edited by Thomas Braun. A book of recollections and correspondence which "enlarges our knowledge of the men as scientists and human beings." *Arthur I. Miller, Department of Physics, Harvard University, From the Foreword. 148 pages, illustrated, $13.95.*



Artists of Israel: 1920-1980

Published for The Jewish Museum, New York

Foreword by Joy Ungerleider-Mayerson. Exhibition curator Susan Tumarkin Goodman. This survey of modern Israeli art presents the work of thirty-six artists and in three introductory essays assesses the state of Israeli art over the last six decades. *152 pages, 100 black-and-white and 12 color illustrations, paperbound $11.50, clothbound $19.50.*

Wayne WAYNE STATE UNIVERSITY PRESS The Leonard N. Simons Bldg. Detroit, Michigan 48202

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

of the rest of Shakespeare's text.

While BAM's motley actors scarcely seem acquainted with, much less blended into, a resident ensemble for the purposes of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, Laird Williamson manages to impose a glaze of uniform mediocrity on his rendering of George Farquhar's *The Recruiting Officer*. I doubt that this farce concerning a military rake's descent on rustic Shropshire to shanghai its able-bodied men, ravish the local wenches and snare the heart of the town's worthiest lady of quality would stand as the most resplendent example of Restoration comedy even under the best of circumstances. Still, it was probably ill-advised for BAM's magazine to remind its subscribers that when the National Theater revived the play in 1964, that company drafted no less than Maggie Smith, Laurence Olivier, Lynn Redgrave, Derek Jacobi, Colin Blakely and Robert Stephens for the task of resuscitating it.

One of the purported strengths of the repertory system is that it can showcase the virtuosity of the resident actors while expanding their past range of skills. BAM's roster afforded no such surprises at a second sampling. The more conspicuous Shakespearean miscreants retained here mostly offered another dose of the same—Morton still bellowing away as the officer's Machiavellian minion, Beth McDonald again simpering, though a bit more aggressively, as a lascivious chicken vendor. More dispiriting yet, the few performers of previous distinction only diluted the favorable impression they had left with *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. Laura Esterman's Hermia, all bruised feelings and nasal consternation, had been the one really imaginative piece of work in Jones's production. Here essaying a headstrong nouveau riche, she resorts to the same repertory of offended snorts and imperious curl-tossings, with much diminished effect. Williamson allows the wry virility Brian Murray brought to his Oberon to slacken into flaccid smugness in the title role, and despite Laurie Kennedy's straightforward pertness as heroine Silvia, it's obvious that with more resourceful direction this part could offer a far wider range of comic and poignant possibilities.

Silvia spends much of the play masquerading as a male to elude her father's matrimonial plans and hew to her beloved officer. Much could be made of her awkward adjustment to this guise, as well as the exultant, vicarious glimpse she gets of the world of masculine freedom. Instead, the actress just struts and intones a touch more heartily than heretofore: no wonder Murray seems so nonplused by her transformation, when, according to the text, Captain Plume should remain unaware of the true sex of this ersatz young gentleman up until the concluding moments of the play. The entire production is keyed to a note of game bluster unrelieved by any real style, and the monotony is visually underscored by the relentless woodsy ochres of Robert Blackman's spare, "rustic" set.

New York is hardly rich enough in institutions committed to full-scale stagings of classic works for me to take much pleasure in scorning BAM's efforts in that direction. But when the results thus far strip vitality from the texts while exposing all the limitations of the company, no one's interests are being served, either on stage or in the audience. BAM's intentions are obviously earnest, but they don't begin to suffice. □

FILMS.

ROBERT HATCH

The Day After Trinity
Les Bons Débarras

The Day After Trinity is the baffling title of a somewhat baffling documentary. Its subtitle, "J. Robert Oppenheimer and the Atomic Bomb," is straightforward: the movie is composed in part of interviews with a number of the scientists who worked at Los Alamos and in part of contemporary film—much of it until recently classified—showing the work in progress, the initial test and the consequences for Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Trinity Site was the code name for the spot in the desert near Alamogordo where the first bomb was fired, but I am not sure how we are to interpret a reference to the day after the event. Taking it literally, and according to the memories of those who speak in the film, the day was spent in mutual congratulations that the "gadget," as they called it, really worked. They were as happy as a bunch of kids, and Oppenheimer is to be seen striding about with his porkpie hat at a particularly rakish angle. But the title seems intended to evoke more than that: it sounds portentous, and yet the portents of atomic destruction had been available, if little regarded, long before Trinity.

It is difficult to characterize the overall tone of the picture as anything but jolly. The scientists who appear on the screen smile and laugh a good deal; they testify to the enormous excitement of being members of "Oppie's" team, and of the dedication to, and exhilaration derived from, the tremendous project. These brilliant men speak of Oppenheimer with awe. You might fairly say that they deify him, and it is not entirely surprising: he was martyred and he is dead. Aside from that, the lightness of their attitude seems to derive from a wish to dispel any impression that they were monsters.

They state that they were willing to work on the bomb because of their fear that, if it were not made, Hitler would win the war and put civilization to the torch. But when Hitler lay dead in his bunker, not a man resigned from Los Alamos. The project, it is explained, had by then developed a momentum that could not be resisted; further, it was believed that the bomb could somehow achieve a relatively benign end to the war with Japan. The film supports this latter motive with large round figures as to the number of American and Japanese lives that would be lost if the conflict dragged on to a conclusion by conventional arms. The scientists did not know, and the film does not mention, that the enemy was already feeling out the terms by which peace might be achieved.

In any case, the team at Los Alamos did not expect Hiroshima; and certainly, it did not expect Nagasaki. Its members were fascinated by the challenge of their assignment and enthralled by the prospect of lighting a sun on the earth. They had a cause and did not let themselves wonder as to its effect. At least, most of them did not: at Trinity, with the gadget poised on its tower, Oppenheimer issued a "ready" memo that ended with, "Should we have a chaplain here?"

What bothers me about *The Day After Trinity* is that it covers in great detail an event of surpassing historical importance, but yet teaches us so little. Hans Bethe says in his interview, "You may well ask why people with kind hearts and human feelings would go and work

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

n weapons of mass destruction." True, you may ask, but you won't find ny really illuminating answers here. reeman Dyson, whose comments tend o be sharper than those of his colleagues, remarks at one point that Oppenheimer made a Faustian bargain vith Gen. Leslie Groves. That perhaps ends Groves more satanic dignity than ie deserves, but the point is interesting. Oppenheimer was given unlimited noney, unlimited facilities and unlimited ower to draft talent: he was placed n a mountain and told that he had een chosen to build man's ultimate veapon. That, no doubt, oversimplifies he situation, for Oppenheimer was a omplicated man, and there is abundant vidence that he had misgivings. But here is also evidence in the film itself hat the brotherhood of Los Alamos vas intoxicated by the vision of what heir minds and hands might achieve. f, in retrospect, they had struggled a bit vith Dyson's allusion, and had been less oncerned to assure us that they meant vell, we might have been given some uidance as to how far even the most indhearted of men should be encouraged to believe that they had been illeted on Olympus.

The Day After Trinity was produced nd directed by Jon Else. He was ssisted principally by David Peoples, anet Peoples and Ralph Wikke.

I am not well enough grounded in resent-day French Canadian fiction to e dogmatic, but what I have read of it eems to me morose, as though determined to expect the worst. There are bvious reasons why French Canadian vriters might take a less than merry iew of life, but the effect of the perasive grimness is to trivialize their vork. The tone I detect is not tragic but leak and bitter, as though the novelists vere rejoicing in misery. It is a perverse entimentality of the sort ridiculed some years ago in *Cold Comfort Farm*.

Rejean Ducharme, a Quebec novelist who wrote the script for *Les Bons Débarras* (Good Riddance), would seem to fall into this category—at least the film does. It is a tale stacked for catastrophe, and as such is less likely to engage your sympathies than to make you resentfully glum.

Michelle (Marie Tifo) is energetic but feckless, an easily swayed and not very intelligent woman of 30 or so who lives in the Laurentian Mountains and supports her younger brother and 13-year-old daughter by supplying firewood to the city folk who have vacation houses in the area. Her brother Guy (Germain Houde) is simple-minded—that is, he is bright enough to handle a truck or a chain saw, but it is folly to let him do so. Drunk or sober, he sulks. Manon, the daughter (Charlotte Laurier), who is very bright indeed, has been made viciously neurotic by the inadequacies of her relatives and the meager opportunities of her life. She has developed an unwholesome passion for her mother (in essence, it is a lust for power) and plots industriously to maintain ascendancy over her.

Since Manon can think circles around everyone else in the picture, she is entirely successful. Michelle has a lover, the local policeman and a decent sort, whom Manon sends packing with a nasty lie. She gets rid of Guy, on whom Michelle foolishly dotes, by goading him into a rage while he is sitting at the wheel of the family van. At the end, she is in bed with her mother, reading aloud from *Wuthering Heights*, a book that feeds her romantic morbidity, and no doubt brooding on how to cope with the child Michelle is soon to bear.

Les Bons Débarras irritated me because it seemed a waste of talented actors, and particularly of Charlotte Laurier, who has a presence that would be notable in an actress twice her age. The whole cast, under the direction of Francis Mankiewicz, works creditably to inject real feeling into the film, but soap opera is as unrewarding as soap sculpture. The effect in this case is like that of introducing a weasel into a cage of mice—unpleasant but not instructive. □

Which is prettier?

FROM THE STANFORD-BINET IQ TEST
USED TODAY TO "TRACK" ELEMENTARY SCHOOL CHILDREN

THE TESTING DIGEST

"Indispensible for anyone who wants to keep up with the important activities in testing."

Harvard Medical School Professor Douglas Porter,
Co-author, *"The Scholastic Aptitude Test: A Critical Appraisal"*

☐ Time Magazine called our last issue "provocative". ETS called it "The **National Enquirer of Testing**". We provide timely information to those legislators, parents, teachers, students, and scientists who are active in the minimum-competency, IQ, "Truth-in-Testing", and employment/licensing test reform movements.

Subscribe!

The Testing Digest
Published quarterly. Check one.

☐ Students $4.50 ☐ Institutions $18.00
☐ Employed $9.00 ☐ Single Copy $3.00

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ **State** ____ **Zip** _____

Mail to: *The Testing Digest*, Room 1000-W
5 Beekman Street
New York, N.Y. 10038

Enclosed is $ _____

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

CLASSIFIED.

INSURANCE

DONALD SHAFFER ASSOCIATES, INC.
ALL FORMS OF INSURANCE
Specialists in Pension & Employee Benefit Planning
11 GRACE AVENUE, Great Neck, N.Y. 11021
212-895-7005, 516-466-4642

POSITIONS AVAILABLE

SOCIALIST REVIEW STAFF POSITION
Job emphasis: business, fundraising, production coordination. We all do editorial/political work. Available 6/1/81. Write: SR, 4228 Telegraph Ave., Oakland, CA 94609; call: 415-653-6100. Salary $15,000 per year. Apply by 3/15/81.

POSITIONS WANTED

Travel author, editor, columnist, small publisher, founder of publication (Voice, Interview) seeks work. Wilcock. 212-582-3112.

EDUCATION

INTERNATIONAL EXPERIENCE DURING YOUR COLLEGE CAREER. Interested in professional work abroad in intercultural communications, Third World development, economics, environment, peace? World Issues Program combines internship abroad with study on multi-cultural campus at the School for International Training. Accredited senior college (junior and senior years). Bachelor's program. Write Dept. D., World Issues Program, SIT, The Experiment in International Living, Brattleboro, VT 05301. 1-800-451-4465

HANDWRITING ANALYSIS

Handwriting analysis. Get your writing analyzed by a professional. Send $5.00 and a copy of your writing to: Box 29163A, Parma, OH 44129.

Handwriting analysis. Mail sample and $15. State age and sex. A. Charlesworth, CGA, PO Box 41, Forest Park, Dayton, OH 45405.

ASSOCIATION

BERTRAND RUSSELL SOCIETY. Information: N, RD1, Box 409, Coopersburg, Pa. 18036.

PERSONALS

FINE ARTS NETWORK helps cultured singles find each other. Nationwide music, literature, art lovers. Information? Stamped, self-addressed envelope to Box 4714TV Cleveland, OH 44126.

Marriage minded Oriental ladies are waiting to hear from you. CHERRY BLOSSOMS Dept N Honokaa HAWAII 96727

SINGLE BOOK LOVERS gets cultured, single, widowed or divorced persons acquainted. Established in 1970. Nationwide. Write to Box AE, Swarthmore, Pa. 19063 or call 215-566-2132.

TECHNOCRACY—TECHNOLOGICAL SOCIAL DESIGN available for one dollar from Technocracy Inc., Continental Headquarters, Savannah, Ohio 44874.

Black & White Men Together—International Support Group. Write BWMT-TG, 279 Collingwood, SF, CA 94114.

Wanted: female Oriental roommate companion. Idyllic country home near colleges. Send photo, info about yourself to Frank, Box 245, Schererville, IN 46375.

Woman, semi-retired, attractive, blonde, small, warm, sincere, bright, frugal, non-smoker, environmentalist, animal nut, enjoys music, dancing, outdoors, over 55, no drugs, tobacco, or religious fanatic. Nation box 615.

Environmentally-oriented people (retired?) wanted to share cost, responsibility, large beautiful house, apartment, barn. Sugarburst, near University. 802-425-3008. Sandy, Charlotte, Vermont 05445.

FOR THE COLLECTOR

OLD COMIC BOOKS
Star Spangled Comics Nos. 65-81, February 1947—June 1948, featuring Robin the Boy Wonder. Mint condition. Will sell individual issues or complete set. Best offer. Nation Box 27.

FAMOUS LAST LETTERS
BY
Joan of Arc, Henry IV, Marie Antoinette, Napoleon and more; one single set of actual letters, reproduced by the Paris Museum in 1935, available for sale. Nation Box 213.

MISCELLANEOUS

Learn calligraphy at home. Write to: Calligraphy, Bo 7069N, Colorado Springs, CO 80933.

49 Biblical Contradictions, $3.00; Discovery, Bo 20331-TN, West Valley City, UT 84120.

THEMM—The Equally Moral Minority. Bullock, 507 Stoneboat Row, Columbia, MD 21044.

Was J.F.K. Killed by a Single Missile from Within th Limousine Itself? Read this brief, convincing documen tary evidence, from Texas, with medical proof Oswal did not kill Kennedy. You've read other theories—don' miss the only one that makes sense. Documentary evi dence, $1.50 postpaid. Planetary Press, Dept. N, P Box 4641, Baltimore, MD 21212. Guaranteed unforge table, or $100 refund.

'Realism': The essence of: Read "In the Beginning." 30-page pamphlet of details with etceteras. Send $3.0 for ppd. copy to N.J. Helmick, Realist, Box 1714, Boise ID 83701.

DON'T BLAME ME, I DIDN'T VOTE REPUBLICAN—Bu tons, 50¢, 3/$1, 10 or more 30¢ ea. RED ROSE BOOK PO Box AA-471, Evanston, IL 60204.

From Cancer Science to the Humanity Christ! Philosoph of all kinds and as one! It's time for some **UNCOMMO SENSE**; pick up **AMERICA'S GAUNTLET** today! Both fo $9, postpaid. Send to: word enterprise, PO Box 535-F Fairview, NJ 07022.

CELTIC FOLK HARPS. For free brochure write: Caswe Harps, 14690 Carrier Lane #25, Guerneville, CA 95446

TRAVEL COLORSLIDES—U.S., foreign, Disney. Catalog 75¢. Travelslides, 7427-NT Washburn, Minneapolis MN 55423.

SUC SEMPER TYRANNIS! Reagan S***s Buttons. $1 ea., $7.50/10: Candig, Box C, 726 University, Evans ton, IL 60201.

Rubber stamps for every busines, personal and provoc ative use. Free catalog: Hoppe's, 1398 Blair, Salt Lak City, UT 84115.

PUBLICATIONS

HOW TO TEST AND IMPROVE YOUR WINE JUDGIN ABILITY, by Irving H. Marcus. The definitive work in th field. 96 pages attractively bound. $3.75 plus 90¢ ship ping. Wine Publications, 96 Parnassus Rd., Berkeley CA 94708.

WHAT IS CONGRESS REALLY UP TO? Find out in the 1980 ADA Voting Record. $2.00 from Americans fo Democratic Action, Suite 850, 1411 K. St., NW, Washington, DC 20005.

WAVE
A fine literary triannual. WAVES, (1972). Only $6 a yr.
Fiction, poetry, reviews, art.
Back issues - $1.
79 Denham Dr., Thornhill, Ont.
CANADA L4J 1P2

Rural Environment Planning, 205 pages, "ideal book fo working planners—one of few that can be picked up and used"—Planning Journal. Send $10: Prof. Fred O. Sargent, author/publisher, 330 Spear St., South Burling ton, VT 05401.

For the convenience of those who wish to place a classified notice in *THE NATION:*
RATES: $.75 per word, 15 word minimum; telephone and POB numbers count as two words, abbreviations and zip codes as one. Copy deadline 17 days prior to week of publication. Payment must accompany order.

Take advantage of our special offer: place an order for two insertions of your ad, and we will print a third insertion free!

TO: *THE NATION*
Classified Department
72 Fifth Avenue, N.Y. N.Y. 10011

Enclosed is my check for $____ for my advertisement to run ____ weeks

Advertiser _____
Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____
Copy: _____

Payment in U.S. currency

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

HEALTH

HAVE DRUGLESS SINUS RELIEF!!
Sinus Sufferers. Find natural relief! This drugless method is inexpensive and used by doctors worldwide. Informative booklet explains all and is available by writing Hydro Med (N), PO Box 91273, L.A. 90009. (Include $2 to cover postage and handling.)

Avoid Toxic Shock: Tampon alternatives. Info, $2. SASE to #68, 471 Fifth St. W., Sonoma, CA 95476.

HOME EXCHANGE

Swap Beverly Hills family home for Manhattan apt. summer 1981-1982. Fried, 121 N. Palm Dr., B.H., CA 90210.

REAL ESTATE

Tucson, Arizona. Buy Townhouses, residences, land, hotels, apartments. Free information. Reputable Roy Long Realty, 252 W. Ina Rd., 85704. M.J. Barrett.

Liberal development lots, lake. Building help, 10% financing. SASE: Gene Kreves, Tumbling Shoals, Arkansas 72851.

BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES

$2000.00 Monthly mailing commission circulars. Experience unnecessary. Free details. Americana. 1108 Colonial, Inkster, Michigan 48141.

Pages and Pages every month of just how to make money in mail order. Sample copy 50¢ R.H. Paushter, 254N 51 Street, Brooklyn, NY 11219.

INVEST IN WASTE! Fundraise for your community, church, organization through recycling. Booklet, $3.00 k/mo: EPI, rm 1635N, 1515 Bway, NY, NY 10036.

RECIPES

Easy money-saving recipes from Canada. Send $5.00 to: Recipes Unlimited, 210 Gary Dr., Weston, Ont., Canada M9N 2M4.

FAT OFTEN DIET. Menu, tips, $3. The Store, 124 Laurel St., Fort Bragg, CA 95437.

VIDEO & FILM

Video cassettes, 16mm, S8. all ratings home use. Huge cat., $1. THUNDERBIRD, Box 65157N, LA, CA 90065.

BOOKS

Hard to Find Books. Free catalog. Paradox Bookshop, Dept. N., 128 E. 4th St., New York, NY 10003.

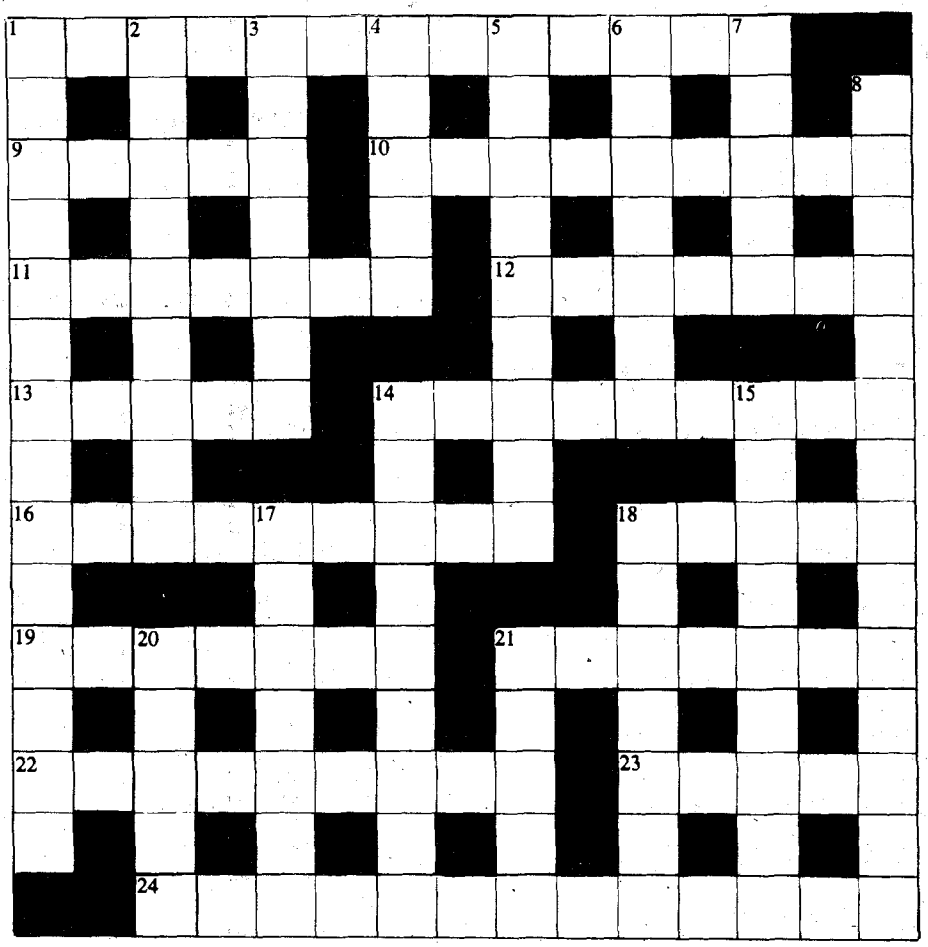
The Nation's Best Crossword Puzzles
Get Book #4 by sending $3.75 (postpaid) to E.S. Lewis, 32 Fort Street, Fairhaven, MA 02719. Or send $8 for a set of all four books by Frank Lewis.

TOBACCO

PIPE SMOKER??? Try THE BLEND and you'll discover. No other aromatic even comes close! THE BLEND—Recently garnered its creator coveted Master Tobacconist. THE BLEND—4 3/8 ounces, $10 post paid. Generous sample & intro offer, $1. Gene A. Bauer, Master Tobacconist, 2308 W. Wis. Ave., Suite 807, Milw. WI 53233.

Crossword Puzzle No. 1855

FRANK W. LEWIS



ACROSS

1 Not the rules concerning how batters are rated—supposedly something that catches up with you sooner or later. (3,2,8)
9 A Snerd-type sound, with a lancer starting out as a lancer should. (5)
10 One, for example, preceding the Nazi ideal variation would almost certainly not approve of Hitler! (9)
11 They used to imply the king's was a model, if he were. (7)
12 What's the point in the flower being so uncontrolled? (7)
13 A stretched-out way for the detente-minded to get. (5)
14 If Scarface left the country it would still be a good place. (9)
16 Evidently an animal runs away from insects. (9)
18 The point of view of an early 11 settler, the names being related. (5)
19 Angel of 18 is not a very good one. (7)
21 A carrier of what used to be something like a crew. (4-3)
22 They are expected to be met by newspaper reporters and others. (9)
23 Like some chicken, rather white. (5)
24 His insect was aureate and his bird was black. (5,5,3)

DOWN

1 Tree, and like some perennials, well screened. (6,3,5)
2 Like a joker at times, goes crazy around the circle—you wouldn't want to chase one! (4,5)
3 A PBS might have it provided it shows some sport to dig around Nagshead. (7)
4 It takes a winning sign (but with a painful expression) to give assurance. (5)
5 Some garments have a check on them. (A winner sometimes does to make more.) (9)
6 The fascination of a well-known "Road" girl, given a general rating. (7)
7 Polish—but he's in trouble! (5)
8 The cost of monogramming is just the first layout! (7,7)
14 Since I'm at home otherwise, Anatolia is equivalent. (4,5)
15 Certainly not a heavy cruiser, its business being to 7. (9)
17 A bad golfer is about the first of everyone to find a limb in front. (7)
18 Mobile state, attained by a workshop to some degree. (7)
20 Saw from our time to almost any old time! (5)
21 An old musket is turned up inside, three-quarters full! (5)

SOLUTION TO PUZZLE NO. 1854

ACROSS: 1 Crabs; 4 Morsel; 11 Explain; 12 Upstart; 13 Half-hitch; 14 Lathe; 15 Beneath notice; 17 Traditionally; 22 Pumps; 24 Orrisroot; 25 Niagara; 26 Naivete; 27 Rotten; 28 Beryl. DOWN: 2 Repulse; 3 Beachead; 5 Ousel; 6 Spastic; 7 and 20 Letter opener; 8 Lethe; 9 Institutional; 10 Rush into print; 16 Transpire; 18 Rampart; 19 Loosely; 20 see 7 down; 21 Ethel; 23 State.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

A Third Interview With The 115-Year-Old Magazine

Your mellow wisdom, gained from your 115 years of weekly existence, has enlightened us in the past. Now I'm wondering if there is some secret of the meaning of life that you would like to share with us?

Secrets? You want secrets, go file a Freedom of Information Act request. I don't believe in secrets. That's why I proposed the Spy Library.

The Spy Library? What's that?

It's an open-shelf library containing all of our current secrets. It would be open to all spies who can prove a sincere interest in espionage. They could search through the card catalogues and check out any secrets they like.

But I don't understand. Wouldn't that be helping them do their work?

Oh, no. You see, under the present classification system the Government does the spies' work for them. Now our secrets are labeled according to their importance—Top Secret, for the really big stuff, down to Confidential, for small-potatoes secrets. In the Spy Library, the foreign agents would have to figure out for themselves what's important.

I see. Do you have any other ideas like that?

Oh sure. All the time. My Swiss missile bank, for example. It would solve the problem of stationing U.S. missiles in Europe. We'd deposit them in Swiss bank accounts, and the trusty Swiss bankers would hide them in various Alps. As everybody knows, you can trust a Swiss banker to keep a secret. So the Europeans wouldn't have to worry about missiles on their soil and the Soviet Union wouldn't feel threatened.

I thought *The Nation* was a serious magazine of current affairs and the arts. Those ideas sound like *Mad* magazine.

My friend, it's a mad world. Sometimes the most outrageous ideas make more sense than what our Government is selling. Take the MX missile. Only Alfred E. Neuman could have dreamed that one up. Most of the time, though, I just try to make sense out of the world as it comes. And if *you* subscribe to *The Nation*, maybe you can too. Just fill out that handy coupon over on the right.

The Nation.

P.O. Box 1953 Marion, Ohio 43302

YES! Send me six months (24 issues) of *The Nation* at the low introductory rate of $11.95. I understand I may cancel at any time and receive a prompt refund for all undelivered copies.

☐ I enclose $11.95. For saving you billing costs, I will receive four extra issues free.

☐ Enclosed is $21 (special discount offer) for one full year (47 issues).

*Add $5 for postage for Canada and Mexico; $7 other foreign subscriptions. Subscriptions payable in equivalent U.S. funds.

Name _____
(PLEASE PRINT)

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

2206

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED